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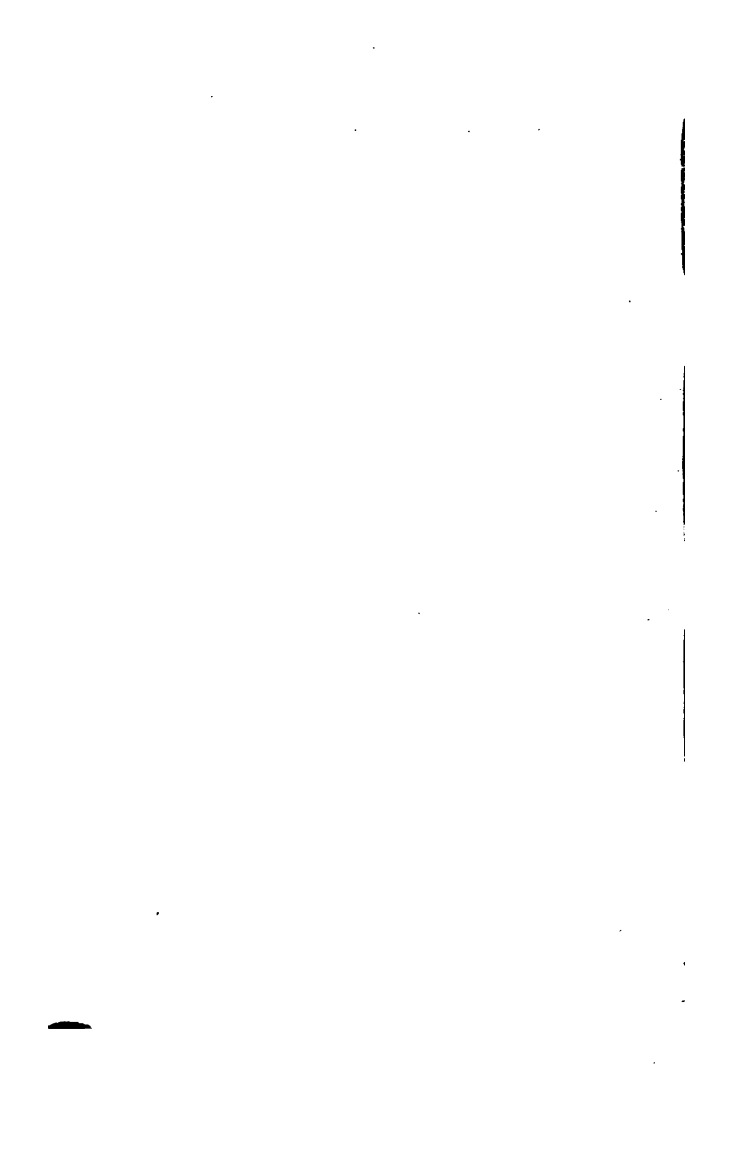
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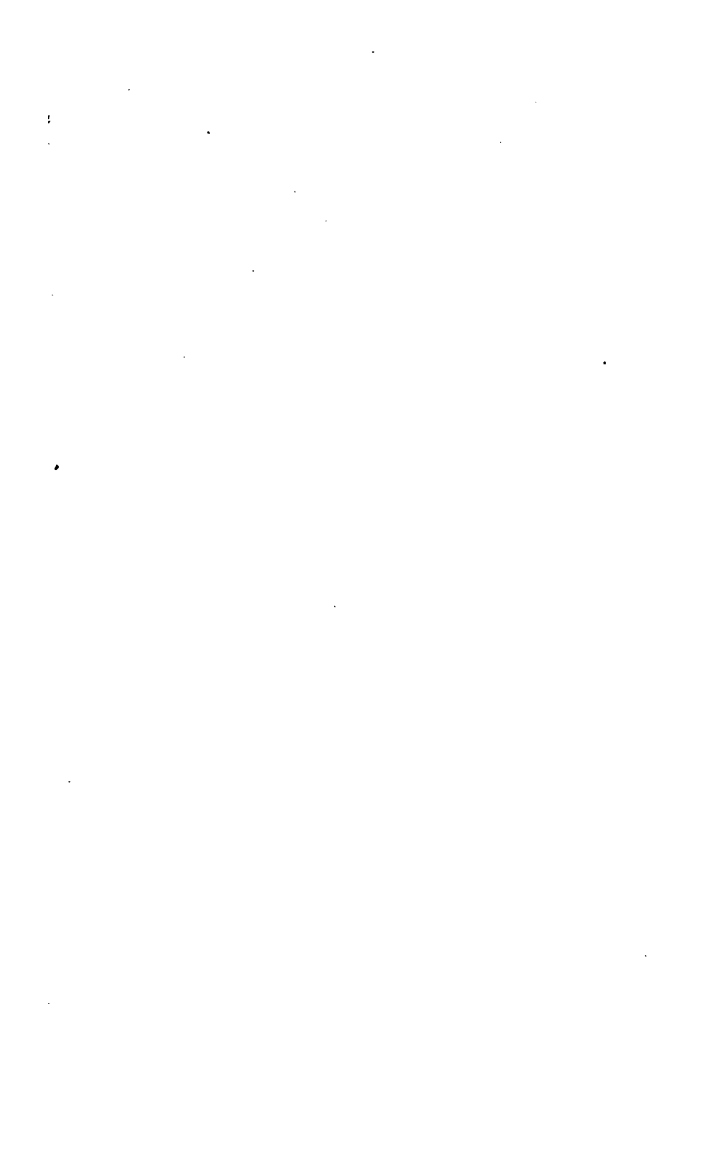


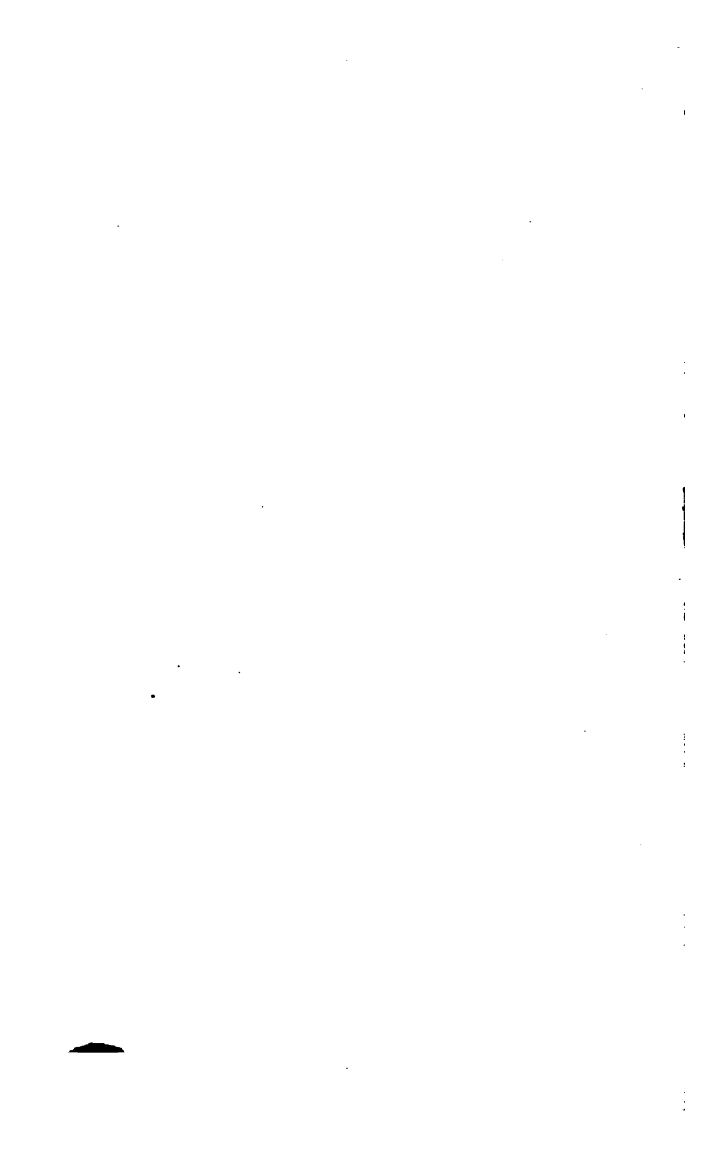
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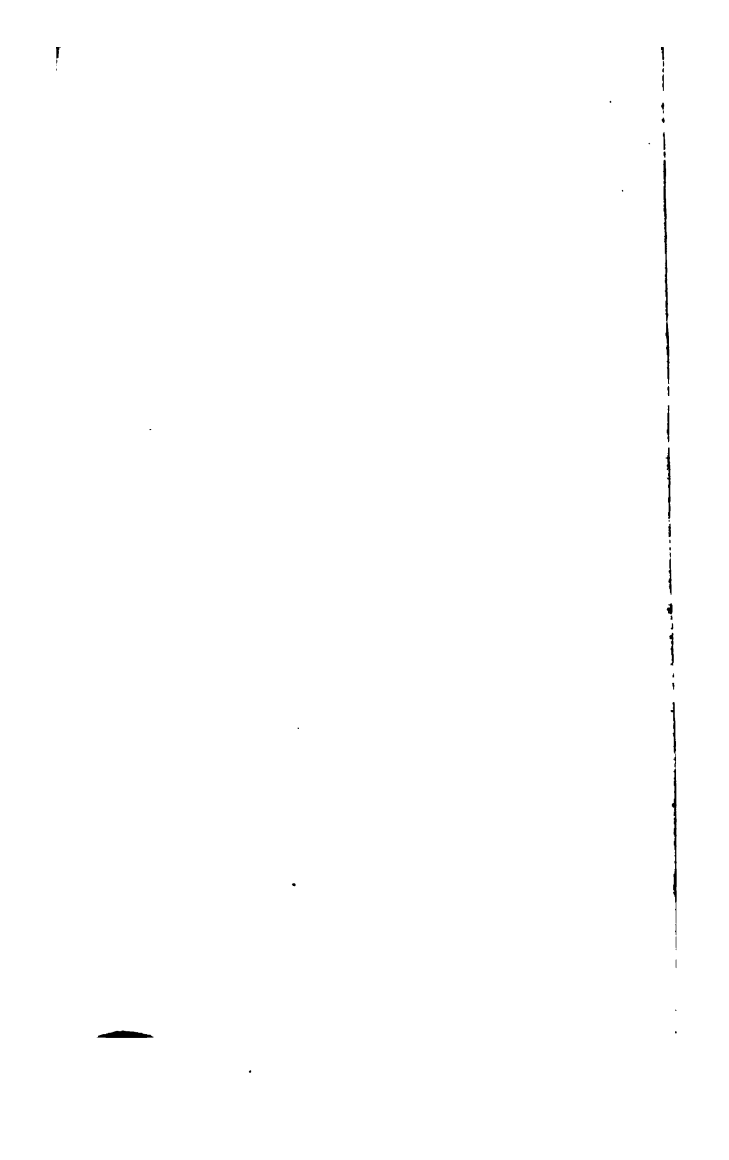
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*Bell*  
*British Theatre*  
*V. 6*  
**THE**  
**EARL OF ESSEX.**

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A  
TRAGEDY,  
By **HENRY JONES.**

---

ADAPTED FOR  
**THEATRICAL REPRESENTATION,**  
AS PERFORMED AT THE  
**THEATRE-ROYAL, IN COVENT-GARDEN.**

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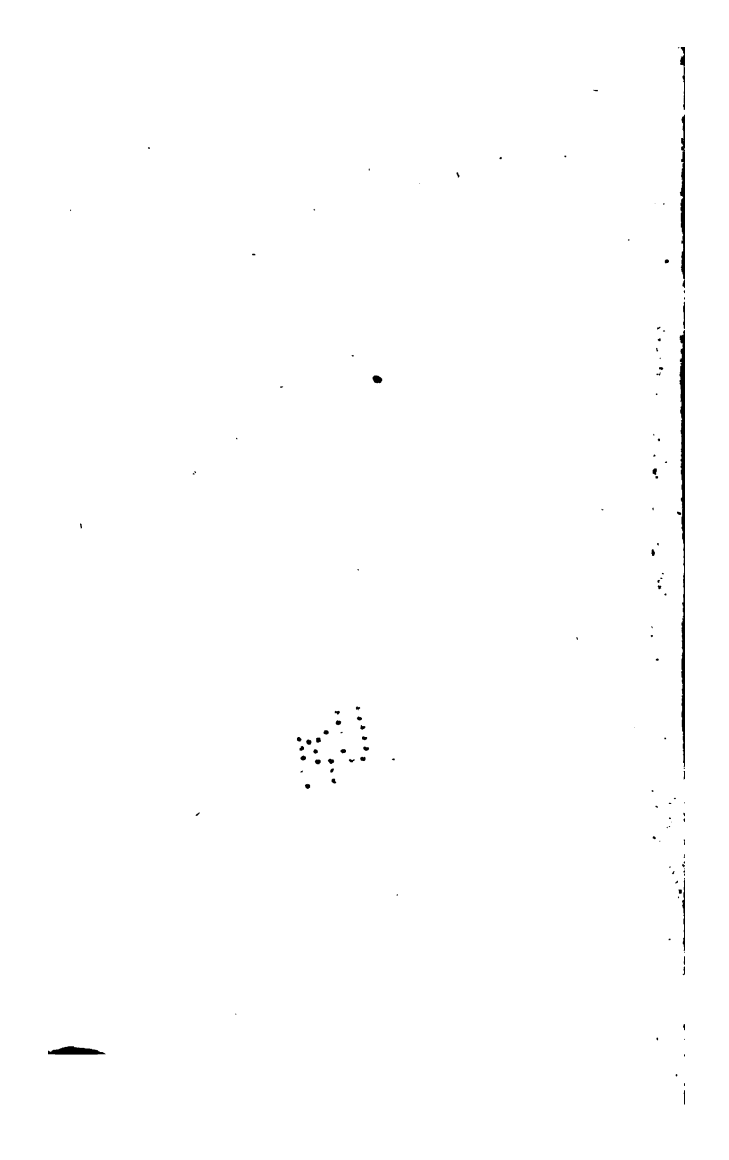
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*Printed for the Proprietors, under the Direction of*  
**JOHN BELL, British Library, STRAND,**  
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**MDCCXCI.**



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TO  
THE RIGHT HONOURABLE  
*PHILIP*,  
EARL OF CHESTERFIELD, &c.  
Knight of the most Noble Order of the Garter.

---

MY LORD,

*THAT* you may be induced to read this dedication through, I shall begin by assuring you, that I do not intend to pay you one compliment. To praise you is unnecessary on all hands; to your Lordship, it is offensive; and for the public, they do not want to be informed of your character: it lives, at present, in the mouths of all men, and posterity will find it in the history of Europe.

*My design, my Lord, is to express my own gratitude, not to delineate your merit. 'Twas your Lordship first took notice of me, in my original obscurity, whence you brought me into life, and have since continued to encourage me by your countenance and favour; and I cannot help confessing, that I have a kind of honest pride in having it known, that your Lordship thought me worthy to be taken under your protection.*

*These, my Lord, are the general obligations that I owe you, of which I have wished to raise some monu-*

*ment, that may remain as long as my name shall be remembered ; but I have more particular reasons for presenting you with this tragedy, as it was your Lordship first pointed out to me the subject, and when it was finished gave me the first assurance of its success, by your approbation. I could not therefore avoid taking advantage of this opportunity, to acknowledge, publicly, all these favours ; and to assure you, that I am*

*Your Lordship's most obliged,*

*Most obedient, and*

*Very humble servant,*

**HENRY JONES.**

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*Gift  
Stables Family  
430-32*

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## HENRY JONES.

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GENIUS is perhaps of no country—it is also attached to no condition—JONES was a Bricklayer, and some genius, it may be presumable, there was where we know there was no culture. He was born in IRELAND, where genius is by no means rare.

When the great Lord CHESTERFIELD went over there, as Lord Lieutenant of that kingdom, the talents of JONES were recommended to his Lordship's protection, and the consequence was his drawing our author over to this country with him, and by his patronage endeavouring to promote his interest and advance his reputation.

JONES, with the kind assistance of his patron, had completed his tragedy of the EARL of ESSEX; and upon its performance, he rose considerably in public estimation—the play ran twelve nights. And now little seemed wanting to complete his future success in life—his muse and himself thus powerfully supported.

But there appears to be no axiom more settled in the code of human conduct, than that success inflates a mean mind, and lifts it up to arrogance; that he whose merit achieves exalted countenance and protection, soon imagines the benefits reciprocal, and that ability is an universal magnet, which if the hand of one man should be shut, will infallibly open the generosity of another. Perhaps where there is pecuniary prudence this may be so; but when there is not, we know that beggary and wretchedness are the sure attendants of the unhappy self-deceiver.

JONES, who had in early life sacrificed to vanity, grew sturdy and unpropitiating, and thus, offering no more the food expected by the GREAT, the food he expected from them was withheld of course. He died, April 1770, in a garret belonging to the master of Bedford Coffee-house, upon whose charity he had some time lingered out a miserable existence.

He left an unfinished play called *The Cave of Idra*—which Hiffernan afterwards completed, and brought out under the title of *The Heroine of the Cave*.

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THE  
*EARL OF ESSEX.*

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THE fate of this unhappy man, so compounded of fiery and ungovernable qualities, has often exercised the dramatic pen. The personages and events of the reign of our ELIZABETH are all so tinged with romantic fiction and romantic passion, the ardour of enthusiastic gallantry seems to have so oddly mingled with the cold trickeries of state policy—the heart and the lips were so unaccountably at variance, that we are not surprised to find an adoring lover turn out a haughty traitor, and a doting queen become a keen and an avenging tyrant.

Such characters, nevertheless, afford the finest subjects for the dramatic muse, which delights in the surprises of sudden transition, and enjoys the tempest of wild and ungovernable emotions.

It is a peculiar circumstance, that these bold and original features of character among us, should have caught the consideration of no masterly writer. JEPHSON and CUMBERLAND, and the superior talents of WALPOLE, have chosen to invent a fable, or build upon an incident taken from a foreign land.

- The present play has certainly many poetical beauties, but they are in truth subordinate ingredients in tragedy. The forcible colouring of strong passion, and the exhibition of the fluctuations of the human mind; the discriminative peculiarities of character; these are the grand objects of the tragic muse, and the story before us is as susceptible of their exertion as any we know of.

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TO  
MR. HENRY JONES,  
ON HIS TRAGEDY OF  
*THE EARL OF ESSEX.*

---

As antient heroes are renown'd in song,  
For rescuing virtue from th' oppressor's wrong,  
So shall thy fame, who snatch'd this well-wrought  
tale  
From dullness' gloomy pow'r, o'er time prevail.

Long had these scenes, wound up with dext'rous art,  
In spite of reason, gain'd upon the heart;  
Thaw'd ev'ry frozen fountain of the eye,  
We wept, 'till even Sorrow's self was dry;  
Yet judgment scorn'd what passion had approv'd,  
And the head wonder'd how the heart was mov'd.  
But, with a fate revers'd, thy work shall boast,  
That soundest judgments shall admire it most.  
Cloath'd in the easy grandeur of thy lines,  
The story brightens, as the diction shines.  
Renew'd with vigour as in age 'tis grown,  
The wond'ring scene sees beauties not its own.

Thus, worn with years, in Afric's sultry vales,  
The crested snake shifts off his tarnish'd scales;

Assumes fresh beauties, brighter than the old,  
Of changing colours intermix'd with gold :  
Reburnish'd, basks beneath the scorching ray,  
Shines with new glories in the face of day,  
Darts fiercer lightning from his brandish'd tongue,  
Rolls more sublime, and seems, at least, more young.

No more shall noise, and wild bombastic rage,  
Usurp th' applauding thunder of the stage ;  
Fustian no more shall pass for true sublime,  
Nor nonsense musically float in rhyme ;  
Nor, in a worse extreme, shall creeping prose,  
For nature and simplicity, impose :  
By thee reform'd, each vicious taste shall fail,  
And critic Justice hold aloft her scale.

Whence beams this dazzling lustre on thy mind ?  
Whence this vast fund of knowledge in mankind,  
Unletter'd genius ? Whence hast thou been taught,  
This dignity of stile, this majesty of thought ;  
This rapid fire, by cool correctness rul'd,  
And every learned elegance, unschool'd ?  
Say, hath great Shakspeare's transmigrated shade  
Inform'd thy mass, or lent thee friendly aid ?  
To him, bless'd bard, untaught, 'twas also giv'n,  
T' ascend, on native wings, invention's brightest  
Heaven \*,

Assuming Phœbus' port ; and in his train,  
The muses all, like handmaids, not in vain,

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\* Alluding to the prologue to Henry V.

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Crouch for employment.—

The passions too, subservient to his will,  
Attentive wait on his superior skill ;  
At the command of his enchanting art,  
Unlock the bursting flood-gates of the heart,  
And in the rapid, head-long stream bear down  
The vanquish'd soul, and make it all his own.

Happy the clime, distinguish'd be the age,  
When genius shoots spontaneous for the stage ;  
Not too luxuriant, nor too trimly neat,  
But, in loose wildness, negligently great.  
O may the gen'rous plant, so wond'rous rare,  
Ne'er want the tender hand of fost'ring care ;  
But, like Apollo's fav'rite tree, be seen,  
For ever flourishing, for ever green.

M' NAMARA MORGAN.

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## PROLOGUE.

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*OUR desp'rate bard a bold excursion tries,  
Tho' danger damp'd his wings, he dar'd to rise:  
From hope, high rais'd, all glorious actions spring;  
'Tis hence that heroes conquer, poets sing.  
Even he may feel the soul-exalting fire,  
Fame prompts the humblest bosom to aspire.*

*Without a guide this rash attempt he made,  
Without a clue from art, or learning's aid.  
He takes a theme where tend'rest passions glow,  
A theme, your grandsires felt with pleasing woe.  
Essex' sad tale he strives to clothe anew,  
And hopes to place it in a stronger view.*

*Poets, like painters, may, by equal law,  
The labour'd piece from different masters draw;  
Perhaps improve the plan, add fire and grace,  
And strike th' impassion'd soul through all the face.  
How far our author has secur'd a claim  
To this exalted palm, this wish'd-for fame,  
Your generous sentiments will soon declare:  
Humanity is ever prone to spare.  
'Twere baseness then your candour to distrust;  
A British audience, will at least, be just.*

---

*A flattering truth he fearful must confess,  
His sanguine friends made promise of success;  
But that, he fears, their ardent wishes wrought,  
Since partial favour seldom sees a fault.  
Then bear, like patient friends, this first essay,  
His next shall thank you in a nobler way.*

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**Dramatis Personae.**

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**COVENT-GARDEN.**

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*Men.*

The Earl of ESSEX	- - - - -	Mr. Holman.
Earl of SOUTHAMPTON	- - - - -	Mr. Farren.
Lord BURLEIGH	- - - - -	Mr. Harley.
Sir WALTER RALEIGH	- - - - -	Mr. Macready.
Lieutenant of the Tower	- - - - -	Mr. Thompson.
Officer	- - - - -	Mr. Evatt.

*Women.*

Queen ELIZABETH	- - - - -	Mrs. Pope.
Countess of RUTLAND	- - - - -	Mrs. Esten.
Countess of NOTTINGHAM	- - - - -	Mrs. Bernard.

*Lords, Ladies, and Attendants.*

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THE  
EARL OF ESSEX.

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ACT I. SCENE I.

*An Antechamber in the Palace. Enter BURLIGH and RALEIGH.*

*Burligh.*

THE bill, at length, has pass'd opposing numbers,  
Whilst crowds seditious clamour'd round the senate,  
And headlong faction urg'd its force within.

*Ral.* It has, my lord.—The wish'd-for day is come,  
When this proud idol of the people's hearts  
Shall now no more be worshipp'd.—Essex falls.

My lord, the minnte's near that shall unravel  
The mystic schemes of this aspiring man.  
Now fortune, with officious hand, invites us  
To her, and opens wide the gates of greatness,  
The way to power. My heart exults ; I see,  
I see, my lord, our utmost wish accomplish'd !  
I see great Cecil shine without a rival,

And England bless him as her guardian saint.  
Such potent instruments I have prepar'd,  
As shall, with speed, o'erturn this hated man,  
And dash him down, by proof invincible.

*Bur.* His day of glory now is set in night,  
And all my anxious hopes, at last, are crown'd.  
Those proofs against him, Raleigh—

*Ral.* All arrived.

*Bur.* Arrived! how? when?

*Ral.* This very hour, my lord :  
Nay more, a person comes, of high distinction,  
To prove some secret treaties made by Essex,  
With Scotland's monarch, and the proud Tyrone.

*Bur.* How say'st ? to prove 'em ?

*Ral.* Ay, my lord, and back'd  
With circumstances of a stronger nature.  
It now appears, his secretary Cuff,  
With Blunt and Lee, were deep concern'd in this  
Destructive scheme, contriv'd to raise this lord,  
And ruin Cecil. O, it is a subtile,  
A deep-laid mischief, by the earl contriv'd,  
In hour malignant, to o'erturn the state,  
And (horror to conceive!) dethrone the queen.

*Bur.* These gladsome tidings fly beyond my hopes!  
The queen will listen now, will now believe,  
And trust the counsel of her faithful Burleigh.  
“ Let this most lucky circumstance be kept  
“ A secret still from public observation.—”  
Dispose 'em well, till kind occasion calls  
Their office forth, lest prying craft mean while



May tamper with their thoughts, and change their minds :

Let them, like batteries conceal'd, appear

At once, both to surprise and to destroy.

*Ral.* This sudden shock, my lord, this weighty stroke,

Must press him headlong down to deep destruction :

Indignant fate marks out this dreaded man,

And fortune now has left him.

*Bur.* Thank the changeling ;

His servile faction soon will stand aghast,

And sink, at distance, from his threat'ning fall.

*Ral.* His headstrong friend, the bold Southampton too,

Now finds his rash endeavours all defeated ;

And storms at thee and the impeaching commons.

*Bur.* Let him rave on, and rage.—The lion in  
The toils entangled, wastes his strength, and roars  
In vain ; his efforts but amuse me now.—

“ *Ral.* What triumphs in my soul shall reign, to see

“ This sanguine and o'erbearing man brought down

“ Beneath my envy ; nay, below my scorn.

“ How young ambition swells my rising hopes !

“ 'Tis Heaven, O Cecil, calls thro' England's voice,

“ And justice, bending from above, invites us.”

*Enter Gentleman.*

*Gent.* My lord, the lady Nottingham desires,  
With much impatience, to attend your lordship.

*Bur.* What may the purport of her bus'ness be ?

Her tender wishes are to Essex ty'd  
In love's soft fetters, and endearing bands:  
"For him, each melting thought awakes desire,  
"And all her soul is lavish'd on that lord,—  
"This unexpected visit much surprises me!  
"What can it mean? She would not come to pry  
"And pick out tales for Essex' ear!—Why let her;  
"I'm arm'd secure against her arts and cunning.  
"Besides, her errand comes too late; for now  
"Her minion's doom'd to fall."—Conduct her in.

[Exit Gent.

And you, my Raleigh, watch Southampton's steps;  
With care observe each movement of his friends;  
That no advantage on that side be lost. [Exit Ral.  
"Southampton's Essex' second self; he shares  
"His headlong councils, and adopts his schemes;  
"His daring heart, and bold, ungovern'd tongue,  
"Are both enlisted in the rash designs  
"Of this proud lord, nor knows a will but his:  
"A limb so fix'd must with the body fall."

*Enter Lady NOTTINGHAM.*

*Not.* Thrice hail to rescu'd England's guiding genius!

His country's guardian, and his queen's defence.  
Great Burleigh, thou whose patriot bosom beats  
With Albion's glory and Eliza's fame;  
Who shield'st her person, and support'st her throne;  
For thee, what fervent thanks, what offer'd vows,  
Do prostrate millions pay!

*Bur.* Bright excellence,  
This fair applause too highly over-rates,  
Too much extols, the low deserts of Cecil.

*Not.* What praises are too high for patriot-worth ;  
Or what applause exceeds the price of virtue ?  
My lord, conviction has at last subdu'd me,  
And I am honour's proselyte :—loo long  
My erring heart pursued the ways of faction ;  
I own myself t' have been your bitt'rest foe,  
And join'd with Essex in each foul attempt  
To blast your honour, and traduce your fame.

*Bur.* Tho' ne'er my wishing heart could call you  
friend,

Yet honour and esteem I always bore you ;  
And never meant, but with respect to serve you.

“ It grieves me, madam, to have thus offended,  
“ Where most my wishes labour'd to oblige.

“ *Not.* I know your honour and your virtues well ;  
“ Your public plans, design'd for England's good,  
“ And all your private merit's weight. But, Oh,  
“ How blind is reason in the maze of passion !  
“ I sought your ruin, labour'd for your fall.  
“ But, if repentance may atone for guilt,  
“ Or self-reproach for sharpest penance pass,  
“ No mortal breast e'er felt more woe than mine,  
“ And Burleigh now may rank me for his friend.

“ *Bur.* That such a worth of soul should be abus'd !  
“ Could I accuse my heart but of a thought  
“ To do you wrong ; if any purpose ever  
“ Against your welfare in my soul arise,

" That look'd with malice on your shining merit,  
" Your matchless beauty, or your brighter virtues,  
" Then let me live despis'd, a proverb made  
" To ev'ry passing slave ; nay more, the scorn  
" And trampled footstool of the man I hate."

*Not.* It is enough, my lord, I know it well,  
And feel rekindling virtue warm my breast ;  
Honour and gratitude their force resume  
Within my heart, and every wish is yours.  
O Cecil, Cecil, what a foe hast thou,  
A deadly foe, whilst hated Essex lives !

*Bur.* I know it well, but can assign no cause.

*Not.* Ambition's restless hand has wound his  
thoughts

Too high for England's welfare ; nay, the queen  
Scarce sits in safety on her throne, while he,  
'Th' audacious Essex, freely treads at large,  
And breathes the common air. Ambition is  
The only god he serves, to whom he'd sacrifice  
His honour, country, friends, and every tie  
Of truth, and bond of nature ; nay, his love.

*Bur.* " I find this bus'ness work as I would have it.

" [*Aside.*"]

The man that in his public duty fails,  
On private virtue will disdainful tread,  
As steps to raise him to some higher purpose :  
In vain each softer wish would plead with him,  
No tender movement in his soul prevails,  
And mighty love, who rules all nature else,  
Must follow here in proud ambition's train.

*Not.* Pronounce it not, my soul abhors the sound,  
Like death.—Oh, Cecil, will you kindly lend  
Some pity to a wretch like me ?

*Bur.* Command,

Madam ; my power and will are yours. “ I feel  
“ Your wrongs, I feel the base returns you’ve met  
“ From this ungrateful and disloyal man,  
“ Tho’ oft your goodness screen’d him from reproof.  
“ Believe me worthy to partake your grievance,  
“ Accept my service, and employ my power.”

*Not.* Will Cecil’s friendly ear vouchsafe to bend  
Its great attention to a woman’s wrongs,  
Whose pride and shame, resentment and despair,  
Rise up in raging anarchy at once,  
To tear with ceaseless pangs my tortur’d soul ?  
Words are unequal to the woes I feel,  
And language lessens what my heart endures.  
Passion repuls’d with scorn, and proud disdain,  
Recoils indignant on my shrinking soul,  
Beats back my vital springs, and crushes life.

*Bur.* Madam, your wrongs, I must confess, are  
great ;

Yet still, I fear, you know not half his falsehood.  
“ Who, that had eyes to look on beauty ; who,  
“ That had a heart to feel that beauty’s power ;”  
Who, but the false, perfidious Essex, could  
Prefer to Nottingham a Rutland’s charms ?  
Start not—By Heav’n, I tell you nought but truth,  
What I can prove, past doubt ; that he receiv’d  
The lady Rutland’s hand, in sacred wedlock,

The very night before his setting out  
For Ireland.

*Not.* Oh, may quick destruction seize 'em !  
May furies blast, and hell destroy their peace !  
May all their rights——

*Bur.* I pray, have patience, madam,  
Restrain awhile your rage ; curses are vain.  
But there's a surer method to destroy him ;  
And if you'll join with me, 'tis done : he falls.

*Not.* Ha ! say'st thou, Burleigh ! Speak, my ge-  
nius, speak ;  
Be quick as vengeance' self to tell me how.

*Bur.* You must have heard the commons have im-  
peach'd him,  
And we have proofs sufficient for his ruin.  
But the queen—you know how fair he stands  
In her esteem ; and Rutland too, his wife,  
Hath full possession of the royal ear.  
What then avail impeachments, or the law's  
Severest condemnation, while the queen  
May snatch him from the uplifted hand of justice ?  
Here then, my Nottingham, begins thy task :  
Try ev'ry art t' incense the queen against him,  
Then step between her and the lady Rutland,  
“ Let not her fondness find the least access,  
“ To the queen's heart to counterwork our purpose.”  
Observe Southampton too, with jealous eye ;  
Prevent, as much as possible, his suit :  
For well I know he will not fail to try  
His eloquence on the behalf of Essex.

*Not.* It shall be done; his doom is fix'd; he dies.  
 Oh, 'twas a precious thought! I never knew  
 Such heart-felt satisfaction! Essex dies,  
 And Rutland, in her turn, shall learn to weep.  
 The time is precious; I'll about it strait.  
 Come, vengeance, come, assist me now to breathe  
 Thy venom'd spirit in the royal ear. [Exit Not.]

*Bur.* There spoke the very genius of the sex.  
 A disappointed woman sets no bounds  
 To her revenge. Her temper's form'd to serve me.

*Enter RALEIGH.*

*Ral.* The lord Southampton, with ungovern'd rage,  
 Resents aloud his disappointed measures.  
 I met him in the outward court; he seeks  
 In haste your lordship, and, forgetting forms,  
 Pursues me hither, and demands to see you.

*Bur.* Raleigh, 'tis well—Withdraw—Attend the  
 queen.  
 Leave me to deal with this o'erbearing man.  
 [Exit Raleigh.]

*Enter SOUTHAMPTON.*

*South.* Where is the man, whom virtue calls her  
 friend?  
 I give you joy, my lord!—Your quenchless fury  
 At length prevails,—and now your malice triumphs.  
 You've hunted honour to the toil of faction,  
 And view his struggles with malicious joy.

*Bur.* What means my lord?

*South.* Oh, fraud! shall valiant Essex  
Be made a sacrifice to your ambition!  
Oh, it smells foul indeed, of rankest malice,  
And the vile stateman's craft. You dare not sure  
Thus bid defiance to each shew of worth,  
Each claim of honour: dare not injure thus  
Your suffering country in her bravest son!

*Bur.* But why should stern reproach her angry  
brow

Let fall on me? Am I alone the cause  
That gives this working humour strength? Do I  
Instruct the public voice to warp his actions?  
Justice, untaught, shall poise th' impartial scales,  
And every curious eye may mark the beam.

*South.* The specious shield, which private malice  
bears,  
Is ever blazon'd with some public good;  
Behind that artful fence, sculk low, conceal'd  
The bloody purpose, and the poison'd shaft;  
Ambition there, and envy nestle close;  
From whence they take their fatal aim unseen;  
And honest merit is the destin'd mark.

*Bur.* "Your warm distemper'd zeal puts rashly by  
"The cool directing hand of wholesome reason,  
"No imputation foul shall rest on me;  
"My honest purposes defy aloud  
"The slander-spreading tongue of busy faction,  
"To cast its venom on my fair report,  
"Or tell posterity, thus Cecil did."  
My country's welfare, and my queen's command,



Have ever been my guiding stars through life,  
 My sure direction still.—To these I now  
 Appeal ;—from these, no doubt, this lord's miscon-  
 duct

Hath widely stray'd ; and reason, not reviling,  
 Must now befriend his cause.

*South.* How ill had Providence  
 Dispos'd the suffering world's oppress'd affairs,  
 Had sacred right's eternal rule been left  
 To crafty politicians' partial sway !  
 Then power and pride would stretch th' enormous  
 grasp,

And call their arbitrary portion, justice :  
 Ambition's arm, by av'rice urg'd, would pluck  
 The core of honesty from virtue's heart,  
 And plant deceit and rancour in its stead :  
 Falsehood would trample then on truth and honour,  
 And envy poison sweet benevolence.

Oh, 'tis a goodly group of attributes,  
 And well befits some statesman's righteous rule !  
 Out, out upon such base and bloody doings !  
 The term of being is not worth the sin ;  
 No human bosom can indure its dart.

Then put this cruel purpose from thee far,  
 Nor let the blood of Essex whelm thy soul.

*Bur.* 'Tis well, my lord ! your words no comment  
 need ;

“ No doubt, they've well explain'd your honest mean-  
 ing ;

" 'Tis clear and full.—To parts, like yours, discretion

" Would be a clog, and caution but incumbrance."

Yet mark me well, my lord, the clinging ivy  
With th' oak may rise, but with it too must fall.

*South.* Thy empty threats, ambitious man, hurt not  
The breast of truth. Fair innocence, and faith,  
Those strangers to thy practis'd heart, shall shield  
My honour, and preserve my friend.—In vain,  
Thy malice, with unequal arm, shall strive  
To tear the applauded wreath from Essex' brow;  
His honest laurel, held aloft by fame,  
" Above thy blasting reach, shall safely flourish,"  
Shall bloom immortal to the latest times;  
Whilst thou, amidst thy tangling snares involv'd,  
Shalt sink confounded, and unpitied fall.

*Bur.* Rail on, proud lord, and give thy choler vent:  
It wastes itself in vain; the queen shall judge  
Between us in this warm debate. To her  
I now repair; and in her royal presence  
You may approve your innocence and faith.  
Perhaps you'll meet me there.—Till then, farewell.

[*Exit.*

*South.* Confusion wait thy steps, thou cruel monster!  
My noble and illustrious friend betray'd,  
By crafty faction and tyrannic power,  
His sinking trophies, and his falling fame,  
Oppress my very soul. I'll to the queen,  
Lay all their envy open to her view,  
Confront their malice, and preserve my friend. [*Exit.*

*The Queen discovered, sitting on her throne. RALEIGH,  
Lords and Attendants.*

*Qu.* Without consulting me! presumptuous man!  
Who governs here?—What! am not I your queen?  
You dar'd not, were he present, take this step.

*Ral.* Dread sovereign, your ever faithful commons  
Have, in their gratitude and love for you,  
Preferr'd this salutary bill against him.

*Enter BURLEIGH.*

*Qu.* You, my Lord Burleigh, must have known of  
this.

The commons here impeach the Earl of Essex  
Of practising against the state and me.  
Methinks I might be trusted with the secret.  
Speak, for I know it well, 'twas thy contrivance.  
Ha! was it not? You dare not say it was not.

*Bur.* I own my judgment did concur with theirs.  
His crimes, I fear, will justify the charge,  
And vindicate their loyalty and mine.

*Qu.* Ha! tell not me your smooth deceitful story!  
I know your projects, and your close cabals.  
You'd turn my favour into party feuds,  
And use my sceptre as the rod of faction:  
But Henry's daughter claims a nobler soul.  
I'll nurse no party, but will reign o'er all,  
And my sole rule shall be to bless my people:  
Who serves them best has still my highest favour:  
This Essex ever did.

*Enter* SOUTHAMPTON.

Behold, Southampton,  
What a base portrait's here! The faithful Essex  
Here drawn at large associating with rebels,  
To spoil his country and dethrone his queen.

*South.* It is not like.—By Heav'n the hand of envy  
Drew these false lines, distorted far from truth  
And honour, and unlike my noble friend  
As light to shade, or hell to highest heav'n.  
Then suffer not, thou best of queens, this lord,  
This valiant lord, to fall a sacrifice  
To treachery and base designs; who now  
Engages death in all his horrid shapes,  
Amidst a hardy race, inur'd to danger;  
But let him face to face, this charge encounter,  
And every falshood, like his foes, shall fly.

*Qu.* To me you seem to recommend strict justice,  
In all her pomp of power. But are you sure  
No subtle vice conceal'd assumes her garb?  
Take heed, that malice does not wear the mask,  
Nor envy deck her in the borrow'd guise.  
“Rancour has often darken'd reason's eye,  
“And judgment winks, when passion holds the scale.”  
Impeach the very man to whom I owe  
My brightest rays of glory! Look to it, lords,  
Take care, be cautious on what ground you tread;  
Let honest means alone secure your footing.  
Raleigh and you withdraw, and wait our leisure.

[*Excunt* Raleigh and South.]

Lord Burleigh, stay; we must with you have farther  
Conf'rence.—I see this base contrivance plain.

Your jealousy and pride, your envy of  
His shining merit, brought this bill to light.  
But mark me, as you prize our high regard  
And favour, I command you to suppress it:  
Let not our name and power be embarrass'd  
In your perplexing schemes. 'Twas you began,  
And therefore you must end it.

*Bur.* I obey.

Yet humbly would intreat you to consider  
How new, unpopular, this step must be,  
To stand between your parliament's enquiry  
And this offending lord.—We have such proofs—

*Qu.* Reserve your proofs to a more proper season,  
And let them then appear. But once again  
We charge you, on your duty and allegiance,  
To stop this vile proceeding; and to wait  
Till Essex can defend himself in person.  
If then your accusations are of force,  
The laws, and my consent, no doubt, are open.  
He has my strict command, with menace mix'd,  
To end effectually this hated war,  
Ere he presume to quit the Irish coast.

*Bur.* Madam, my duty now compels me to—

*Qu.* No more! see that my orders be obey'd.

[*Exit Bur.*]

Essex a traitor!—it can never be—  
His grateful and his honest soul disdains it.—  
I know him hot, ambitious, rash, impatient;

But then he's firmly anchor'd in his duty :  
Tho' stormy passions toss him to and fro.  
Can he prove false ? so high advanc'd, so honour'd,  
So near my favour—and—I fear so near  
My heart !—Impossible.—This Burleigh hates him,  
And, his rival, therefore would destroy him ;  
But he shall find his narrow schemes defeated.  
In vain their fraudulent efforts shall combine  
To shake my settled soul, my firm design ;  
Resolv'd to lift bright virtue's palm on high,  
Support her grandeur, and her foes defy. [Exit.

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ACT II. SCENE I.

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*Enter BURLEIGH and RALEIGH.*

*Burleigh.*

Essex arriv'd ! Confusion to my hopes !  
His presence will destroy me with the queen.  
I much suspect he had some private notice,  
Perhaps, a punctual order, to return.  
He lurks too near her heart.—What's to be done ?  
“ Prepare the witnesses with speed ; apprize  
“ The lady Nottingham.—Southampton's pride,  
“ And Rutland's too, will lift the crest again.  
“ But fly, my Raleigh, send me Nottingham,  
“ [Exit Raleigh.  
“ We must alarm the queen with new commotions

" In many parts of her dominions rais'd :  
 " All this, and more, must now be pass'd for truth.  
 " This sudden blow has struck me to the soul ;  
 " 'Tis gone too far, he dies—proud Essex now,  
 " Or Cecil falls." Now is th' important crisis—  
 Keep up thy usual strength ; my better genius,  
 Direct my steps to crush my mortal foe.

*Enter QUEEN and RALEIGH.*

*Qu.* It cannot be ! Return'd without my leave !  
 Against my strict command !—Impossible !

*Ral.* Madam, the earl is now at court, and begs  
 An audience of your majesty.

*Qu.* Amazing !  
 What ! break his trust ! desert his high command,  
 Forsake his post, and disobey his queen !  
 'Tis false—invented all.—You wish it so.

*Bur.* Madam, I wish some other rumours false :  
 Reports, I fear, of great concern to you.

*Qu.* What rumours ? what reports ? your frown  
 would much

Denote : your preface seems important.—Speak.

*Bur.* Some new commotions are of late sprung up  
 In Ireland, where the west is all in arms,  
 And moves with hasty march to join Tyrone,  
 And all his northern clans. A dreadful power !  
 Nay more, we have advices from the borders  
 Of sudding risings, near the banks of Tweed !  
 'Tis thought, to favour an attempt from Scotland.  
 Mean while, Tyrone embarks six thousand men

My shame was wafted in each passing gale,  
Each swelling tide came loaded with my wrongs ;  
And echo sounded forth, from faction's voice,  
The traitor Essex.—Was't not hard, my queen,  
That while I stood in danger's dreadful front,  
Encountering death in every shape of terror,  
And bleeding for my country ?——Was't not hard,  
My mortal enemies at home, like cowards,  
Shou'd in my absence basely blast my fame ?

*Qu.* It is the godlike attribute of kings  
To raise the virtuous and protect the brave.  
I was the guardian of your reputation,  
What malice, or what faction then could reach you ?  
My honour was expos'd, engag'd for yours :  
But you found reason to dislike my care,  
And to yourself assum'd the wrested office.

*Essex.* If aught disloyal in this bosom dwells,  
If aught of treason lodges in this heart,  
May I to guilt and lasting shame be wedded,  
The sport of faction, and the mark of scorn,  
The world's derision, and my queen's abhorrence,  
Stand forth the villain, whose invenom'd tongue  
Would taint my honour and traduce my name,  
Or stamp my conduct with a rebel's brand !  
Lives there a monster in the haunts of men,  
Dares tear my trophies from their pillar'd base,  
Eclipse my glory, and disgrace my deeds ?

*Q.* This ardent language, and this glow of soul,  
Were nobly graceful in a better cause ;  
Where virtue warrants, and where truth inspires ;



But injur'd truth, with brow invincible,  
Frowns stern reproof upon the false assertion,  
And contradicts it with the force of facts.  
From me you have appeal'd, ungrateful man;  
The laws, not I, must listen to your plea.  
Go, stand the test severe, abide the trial,  
And mourn, too late, the bounty you abus'd.

[*Exeunt* Queen, Southampton, &c.]

*Essex.* Is this the just requital, then, of all  
My patriot-toils and oft-encounter'd perils,  
Amidst th' inclemencies of camps and climes?  
Then be it so.——Unmov'd and dauntless, let me  
This shock of adverse fortune firmly stand.  
But yet, methinks, 'tis somewhat sudden too!  
My greatness, now depriv'd of each support,  
Which bore so long its envy'd weight aloft,  
Must quick to ruin fall, and crush my hopes.

*Enter* SOUTHAMPTON.

*South.* Alas, my lord! the queen's displeasure kindles

With warmth increasing; whilst Lord Burleigh labours

T' inflame her wrath, and make it still burn fiercer.

*Essex.* I scorn the blaze of courts, the pomp of kings;

I give them to the winds, and lighter vanity;  
Too long they've robb'd me of substantial bliss,  
Of solid happiness, and true enjoyments.  
But lead me to my mourning love; alas!

She sinks beneath oppressing ills ; she fades,  
She dies for my afflicting pangs, and seeks  
Me, sorrowing, in the walks of woe.—Distraction !  
Oh, lead me to her, to my soul's desire.

*South.* Let caution guide you in this dangerous step.  
Consider well, my lord, the consequence—  
For should the queen (forbid it Heaven !) discover  
Your private loves, your plighted hands, no power  
On earth could step between you and destruction.  
“ Lock up this secret from the prying world.”

*Enter BURLEIGH.*

*Bur.* My lord of Essex, 'tis the queen's command,  
That you forthwith resign your staff of office ;  
And further, she confines you to your palace.

*Essex.* Welcome, my fate. Let fortune do her utmost ;  
I know the worst, and will confront her malice,  
And bravely bear the unexpected blow.

*Bur.* The queen, my lord, demands your quick compliance.

*Essex.* Go, then, thou gladsome messenger of ill,  
And, joyful, feast thy fierce rapacious soul  
With Essex' sudden and accomplish'd fall.  
The trampled corse of all his envy'd greatness,  
Lies prostrate now beneath thy savage feet ;  
But still th' exalted spirit mounts above thee.  
Go, tell the queen thy own detested story :  
Full in her sight disclose the snaky labyrinths

And lurking snares you plant in virtue's path,  
To catch integrity's unguarded step.

*Bur.* How ill repaid are public toils and cares,  
"Where active honesty, with station join'd,  
"Incurs but calumny, and foul reproach!"  
Your country has impeach'd, your queen accus'd you;  
To these address your best defence, and clear  
Your question'd conduct from disloyal guilt.  
What answer to the queen shall I return?

*Essex.* My staff of office I from her receiv'd,  
And will to her, and her alone, resign it.

*Bur.* This bold refusal will incense the queen.  
This arrogance will make your guilt the stronger.

[*Exit.*

*South.* Sustain, my noble friend, thy wonted greatness;

Collect thy fortitude, and summon all  
Thy soul, to bear with strength this crushing weight,  
Which falls severe upon thee; whilst my friendship  
Shall lend a helping hand, and share the burthen.  
I'll hence with speed, and to the queen repair,  
And all the power of warmest words employ,  
To gain you yet one audience more, and bring  
Her majesty to milder thoughts. Farewell. [*Exit.*

*Essex.* As newly wak'd from all my dreams of glory,  
Those gilded visions of deceitful joys,  
I stand confounded at the unlook'd-for change,  
And scarcely feel this thunder-bolt of fate.  
The painted clouds, which bore my hopes aloft,  
Alas, are now vanish'd to yielding air,

And I am fall'n indeed !——

How weak is reason, when affection pleads !  
How hard to turn the fond, deluded heart  
From flatt'ring toys, which sooth'd its vanity !  
The laurell'd trophy, and the loud applause,  
The victor's triumph, and the people's gaze ;  
The high-hung banner, and recording gold,  
Subdue me still, still cling around my heart,  
And pull my reason down.

*Enter RUTLAND.*

*Rut.* Oh, let me fly  
To clasp, embrace, the lord of my desires,  
My soul's delight, my utmost joy, my husband !  
I feel once more his panting bosom beat ;  
Once more I hold him in my eager arms,  
Behold his face, and lose my soul in rapture.

*Essex.* Transporting bliss ! my richest, dearest treasure !

My mourning turtle, my long absent peace,  
Oh, come yet nearer, nearer to my heart !  
My raptur'd soul springs forward to receive thee :  
Thou Heav'n on earth, thou balm of all my woe !

*Rut.* O, shall I credit then each ravish'd sense ;  
Has pitying Heav'n consented to my prayer ?  
It has, it has ; my Essex is return'd !  
But language poorly speaks the joys I feel ;  
Let passion paint, and looks express my soul.

*Essex.* With thee, my sweetest comfort, I'll retire  
From splendid palaces, and glitt'ring throngs,

To live embosom'd in the shades of joy,  
Where sweet content extends her friendly arms,  
And gives encreasing love a lasting welcome.  
With thee, I'll timely fly from proud oppression,  
Forget our sorrows, and be bless'd for ever.

*Rut.* O, let us hence, beyond the reach of power;  
Where fortune's hand shall never part us more.  
In this calm state of innocence and joy,  
I'll press thee to my throbbing bosom close.  
Ambition's voice shall call in vain; the world,  
The thankless world, shall never claim thee more,  
And all thy business shall be love and me.

*Essex.* The queen, incens'd at my return, abandons me

To Cecil's malice, and the rage of faction.  
I'm now no more the fav'rite child of fortune:  
My enemies have caught me in the toil,  
And life has nothing worth my wish, but thee.

*Rut.* Delusive dream of fancied happiness!  
And has my fatal fondness then destroy'd thee?  
Oh, have I lur'd thee to the deadly snare  
Thy cruel foes have laid? "Oh, have I put  
"Thy life in peril? My officious tears  
"Would needs inform thee of their wicked schemes."  
I dreaded Cecil's malice, and my heart,  
Longing to see thee, with impatience listen'd  
To its own alarms; and prudence sunk beneath  
The force of love.

*Essex.* Forbear, my only comfort;  
Oh, tell me not of danger, death, and Burleigh;

Let every star shed down its mortal bane  
On my unshelter'd head : whilst thus I fold  
Thee in my raptur'd arms ; I'll brave them all,  
Defy my fate, and meet its utmost rigour.

*Rut.* Alas, my lord! consider where we are.  
Oh ! 'tis the queen's apartment ; death is here.  
“ I came to thee through peril's ambush'd path,  
“ And every danger risk'd for thy embrace.”  
Each precious moment is by fate beset,  
And time stands trembling whilst we thus confer.

*Essex.* Then, let us hence from this detested place ;  
My rescu'd soul disdains the house of greatness,  
Where humble honesty can find no shelter.  
From hence we'll fly, where love and virtue call ;  
Where happiness invites—that wish of all :  
With sweet content enjoy each blissful hour,  
Beyond the smiles of fraud, or frowns of power.

[*Exeunt.*]

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ACT III. SCENE I.

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*Enter BURLEIGH and NOTTINGHAM.*

*Nottingham.*

My lord, I've sought you out with much impatience.  
You've had an audience of the queen : what follow'd ?

*Bur.* Soon as I told her Essex had refus'd  
To yield his dignities, and staff of office,

"Against her high command, pronounc'd by me,"  
 She seem'd depriv'd of reason for a moment;  
 Her working mind betray'd contending passions,  
 Which, in her alter'd face, appear'd by turns.  
 She paus'd, like thunder in some kindling cloud,  
 The instant burst with dreadful fury forth:  
 "And has th' ungrateful wretch defy'd my man-  
     date?

"The proud, audacious traitor scorn'd my power;  
 "He dares not, sure?—He dies—the villain dies.  
 "Then, sudden, soften'd into milder sounds,  
 "And call'd him rash, unhappy, gallant Essex!  
 "On me her fury fell; my crafty plans  
 "Against his reputation, fame, and life,  
 "Had driven him to extremes—my malice did it—  
 "My envy was his bane; with all that passion  
 "Or fury could suggest.—I begg'd to know  
 "Her royal will concerning Essex; urg'd  
 "Again his insolence.—Amaz'd, awhile  
 "She stood, and wist not what to do.—At length,  
 "Collecting all her mind, these words she utter'd:"—  
 Let him to the Tow'r.—I instantly withdrew,  
 But soon was countermanded, and desir'd  
 To bring the Earl of Essex to her presence,  
 I like it not, and much I fear, she'll stand  
 Between this high offender and the laws.

*Not.* Is Essex then secur'd?

*Bur.* Madam, he is;

And now comes guarded to the court.

*Enter Gentleman.*

*Gent.* Madam, the queen  
Is in her closet, and desires to see you. [*Exit.*  
*Not.* I attend her.

*Bur.* She wants, no doubt, to be advis'd by you.  
Improve this fair occasion, urge it home;  
"She must be quick'ned by repeated strokes  
"Of fresh indignities, by Essex offer'd  
"T' her royal person, and prerogative.  
"Be circumspect and cautious! mark her well."

*Not.* I know her foible. Essex long has had  
An interest in her heart, which nothing can  
O'erturn, except his own ungovern'd spirit.  
It is, indeed, the instrument by which  
We work, and cannot fail, if rightly us'd.

*Bur.* Madam, the queen expects you instantly.  
I must withdraw, and wait the earl's arrival. [*Exeunt.*

*QUEEN discovered.*

*Qu.* Ill-fated, wretched man! perverse and ob-  
stinate!  
He counterworks my grace, and courts destruction.  
He gives his deadly foes the dagger to  
Destroy him, and defeats my friendly purpose,  
Which would, by seeming to abandon, save him.  
Nor will he keep the mask of prudence on  
A moment's space.—What! must I bear this scorn?  
No: let me all the monarch re-assume;



Exert my power, and be myself again.—

Oh, ill-performing, disobedient heart !—

Why shrink'st thou, fearful, from thy own resolve ?

*Enter* NOTTINGHAM.

Thou com'st in time ; I'm much disturb'd, abus'd,

My Nottingham, and would complain to thee

Of insolence, neglect, and high contempt.

Essex presum'd to dictate laws within

My palace gates. How say'st thou, Nottingham ?

*Not.* Surely, my gracious queen, it cannot be !

His heat and passion never cou'd impel him

To take so bold a step, to such rash guilt :

Methinks his very honour should prevent it.

*Qu.* Thy open, honest mind untutor'd seems

In life's ungrateful and degenerate school ;

Where stubborn vice in every form appears,

Mocking correction's ineffectual rod.

It is, indeed, an evil hard to bear ;

This haughty man has wanton'd with my grace,

Abus'd my bounty, and despis'd my favours.

" That giving goodness should profusely flow

" T' enrich the surly glebe, where only thorns

" And noxious weeds will spring ! "

Resentment, then, shall in her turn prevail ;

To angry laws I'll give this victim up.

*Not.* His conduct has, I fear, been too unguarded :

His hasty temper knows not where to stop.

Ambition is the spur of all his actions,

Which often drives him o'er his duty's limits ;  
(At least his enemies would have it so.)  
But malice, madam, seldom judges right.

*Qu.* Oh, Nottingham ! his pride is past enduring ;  
This insolent, audacious man forgets  
His honour and allegiance ;—and refus'd  
To render up his staff of office, here,  
Beneath my very eye.

*Not.* Presumptuous man !  
Your faithful subjects will resent this pride,  
This insolence, this treason to their queen ;  
They must, my gracious sovereign.—'Tis not safe  
To shield him longer from their just resentment.  
Then give him up to justice and the laws.

*Qu.* You seem well pleas'd to urge severity.—  
Offended majesty but seldom wants  
Such sharp advisers—Yet no attribute  
So well befits the exalted seat supreme,  
And power's disposing hand, as clemency.  
Each crime must from its quality be judg'd ;  
And pity there should interpose, where malice  
Is not the aggressor. Hence ! I'll hear no more.

*Not.* Madam, my sentiments were well intended ;  
Justice, not malice, mov'd my honest zeal.  
My words were echoes of the public voice,  
Which daily rises, with repeated cries  
Of high complaint, against this haughty lord.  
I pity, from my heart, his rash attempts,  
And much esteem the man.

Qu. Go, Nottingham,  
My mind's disturb'd, and send me Rutland hither.

[Exit Not.

O, vain distinction of exalted state !  
No rank ascends above the reach of care,  
Nor dignity can shield a queen from woe.  
Despotic nature's stronger sceptre rules,  
And pain and passion in her right prevails.  
Oh, the unpity'd lot, severe condition,  
Of solitary, sad, dejected grandeur !  
Alone condemn'd to bear th' unsocial throb  
Of heart-felt anguish, and corroding grief ;  
Depriv'd of what, within his homely shed,  
The poorest peasant in affliction finds,  
The kind, condoling comfort of a dear  
Partaking friend.—

*Enter Countess of RUTLAND.*

Rutland, I want thy timely  
Counsel. I'm importun'd, and urg'd to punish—  
But justice, sometimes, has a cruel sound,  
“Where mercy may with prudence meet, and both  
“Agree to soften rigour.”—Essex has,  
No doubt, provok'd my anger, and the laws ;  
His haughty conduct calls for sharp reproof,  
And just correction. Yet I think him guiltless  
Of studied treasons, or design'd rebellion.  
Then, tell me, Rutland, what the world reports,  
What censure says of his unruly deeds.  
Rut. The world, with envy's eye, beholds his merit:

Madam, 'tis malice all, and false report. •  
I know his noble heart, 'tis fill'd with honour :  
No trait'rous taint has touch'd his generous soul ;  
His grateful mind still glows with pure affection ;  
And all his thoughts are loyalty and you.

*Qu.* I grant you, Rutland, all you say, and think  
The earl possess'd of many splendid virtues.  
What pity 'tis, he should afford his foes  
Such frequent, sad occasions to undo him !

*Rut.* What human heart can, unafflicted, bear  
Such manly merit in distress : “ such worth  
“ Betray'd ; such valour in the toil,” beset  
By cruel foes, and faction's savage cry ?  
My good, my gracious mistress, stretch, betimes,  
Your saving arm, and snatch him from destruction,  
From deadly malice, treachery, and Cecil.  
O, let him live, to clear his conduct up !  
My gracious queen, he'll nobly earn your bounty,  
And with his dearest blood deserve your mercy.

*Qu.* Her words betray a warm, unusual fervour ;  
Mere friendship never could inspire this transport.

[*Aside.*

I never doubted but the earl was brave ;  
His life and valiant actions all declare it :  
I think him honest too, but rash and headstrong.  
I gladly would preserve him from his foes,  
And therefore am resolv'd once more to see him.

*Rut.* Oh, 'tis a godlike thought, and Heav'n itself  
Inspires it. Sure some angel moves your heart,  
Your royal heart, to pity and forgiveness.

This gracious deed shall shine in future story,  
And deck your annals with the brightest virtue ;  
Posterity shall praise the princely act,  
And ages yet to come record your goodness.

*Qu.* I'll hear no more—Must I then learn from you  
To know my province, and be taught to move,  
As each designing mind directs?—Leave me.

*Rut.* Her frowns are dreadful, and her eye looks  
terror.

I tremble for my Essex. Save him, Heav'n! [*Exit.*

*Qu.* Her warmth has touch'd me home. My jealous  
heart,

My fearful and suspicious soul's alarm'd.

*Enter BURLEIGH, RALEIGH, and others.*

*Bur.* The Earl of Essex waits your royal will.

*Qu.* Let him approach—And now, once more sup-  
port

Thy dignity, my soul ; nor yield thy greatness  
To strong usurping passion—But he comes.

*Enter ESSEX, SOUTHAMPTON, Guards.*

*Essex.* Permitted thus to bend, with prostrate heart,  
[*Kneels.*

Before your sacred majesty ; I come,  
With every grateful sense of royal favour  
Deeply engrav'd within my conscious soul.

*Qu.* I sent my orders for your staff of office.

*Essex.* Madam, my envy'd dignities and honours,  
I first from your own royal hand receiv'd ;

And therefore justly held it far beneath me  
To yield my trophies, and exalted power,  
So dearly purchas'd in the field of glory,  
To hands unworthy. No, my gracious queen,  
I meant to lay them at your royal feet ;  
Where life itself a willing victim falls,  
If you command.

*Qu.* High swelling words, my lord, but ill supply  
The place of deeds, and duty's just demand.  
In danger's onset, and the day of trial,  
Conviction still on acting worth attends ;  
Whilst mere professions are by doubts encumber'd.

*Essex.* My deeds have oft declar'd, in danger's front,  
How far my duty and my valour lead me.  
Allegiance still my thirst of glory fir'd,  
And all my bravely gather'd, envy'd laurels,  
Were purchas'd only to adorn my queen.

*Qu.* " Yet fact o'er fallacy must still prevail,  
" And eloquence to simple truth give way."  
Your guilty scorn of my intrusted power,  
When with my mortal foes you tamely dally'd,  
By hardy rebels brav'd, you poorly sought  
A servile pause, and begg'd a shameful truce.  
Should Essex thus, so meanly compromise,  
And lose the harvest of a plenteous glory,  
In idle treaties, and suspicious parly ?

*Essex.* Oh, deadly stroke ! My life's the destin'd  
mark.

The poison'd shaft has drank my spirits deep.  
Is't come to this ? Conspire with rebels ! Ha !

I've serv'd you, madam, with the utmost peril,  
 And ever glory'd in th' illustrious danger;  
 Where famine fac'd me with her meagre mien,  
 And pestilence and death brought up her train.  
 I've fought your battles, in despite of nature,  
 Where seasons sicken'd, and the clime was fate.  
 My power to parly, or to fight, I had  
 From you; the time and circumstance did call  
 Aloud for mutual treaty and condition;  
 For that I stand a guarded felon here.—A traitor,  
 Hemm'd in by villains, and by slaves surrounded.

*Qu.* Shall added insolence, with crest audacious,  
 Her front uplift against the face of power.  
 Think not that injur'd majesty will bear  
 Such arrogance uncheck'd, or unchastis'd.  
 No public trust becomes the man, who treads,  
 With scornful steps, in honour's sacred path,  
 And stands at bold defiance with his duty.

*Essex.* Away with dignities and hated trust,  
 With flattering honours, and deceitful power!  
 Invert th' eternal rules of right and justice;  
 Let villains thrive, and out-cast virtue perish;  
 Let slaves be rais'd, and cowards have command.  
 Take, take your gaudy trifles back, those baits  
 Of vice, and virtue's bane.—'Tis clear, my queen,  
 My royal mistress, casts me off; nay, joins  
 With Cecil to destroy my life, and fame.

*Qu.* Presuming wretch! Audacious traitor!

*Essex.* Traitor!

*Qu.* Hence from my sight, ungrateful slave, and  
learn

At distance to revere your queen.

*Essex.* Yes; let

Me fly beyond the limits of the world,  
And nature's verge, from proud oppression far,  
From malice, tyranny, from courts, from you.

*Qu.* Traitor! villain!

[*Strikes him.*]

*Essex.* Confusion! what, a blow!

Restrain, good Heav'n! down, down, thou rebel pas-  
sion,

And, judgment, take the reins. Madam, 'tis well—  
Your soldier falls degraded.

His glory's tarnish'd, and his fame undone.

O, bounteous recompence from royal hands!

But you, ye implements, beware, beware,

What honour wrong'd, and honest wrath can act.

*Qu.* What would th' imperious traitor do? My  
life

Beyond thy wretched purpose stands secure.

Go, learn at leisure what your deeds deserve,

And tremble at the vengeance you provoke.

[*Exeunt all but Essex and Southampton.*]

*Essex.* Disgrac'd and struck! Damnation! Death  
were glorious.

Revenge! revenge!

*South.* Alas, my friend! what would

Thy rage attempt? Consider well the great  
Advantage now your rash, ungovern'd temper



Affords your foes. The queen incens'd, will let  
Their fury loose.—I dread the dire event.

*Essex.* Has honest pride no just resentment left?  
Nor injur'd honour feeling? Not revenge!  
High Heaven shall bear, and earth regret my wrongs.  
Hot indignation burns within my soul.  
I'll do some dreadful thing—I know not what;  
Some deeds as horrid as the shame I feel,  
Shall startle nature, and alarm the world.  
Then hence, like lightning, let me furious fly,  
To hurl destruction at my foes on high;  
Pull down oppression from its tyrant seat,  
Redeem my glory, or embrace my fate. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV. SCENE I.

*Enter QUEEN and NOTTINGHAM.*

*Queen.*

Not taken yet!

*Not.* No, madam; for the earl  
Of Essex, leagu'd with desperate friends, made strong  
And obstinate resistance; till, at length,  
O'erpower'd by numbers, and increasing force,  
He fled for shelter to a small retreat,  
A summer-house upon the Thames; resolv'd  
To perish, rather than submit to power.

*Qu.* “O, wretch detested! O, unheard-of treason!  
“Conspire against my life, within my view!

“ My reach ! so near my very palace gates !  
“ Perfidious monster !—What can prudence do,  
“ Or human wisdom, more than judge from outside,  
“ And flattering likeness ? Kings can see no farther.  
“ High Heav’n, alone, can read the heart, in all  
“ Its utmost frauds, and mystic characters.”  
Oh, where shall majesty bestow its favours,  
Since Essex has a traitor prov’d to me,  
Whose arm hath rais’d him up to power and greatness ;  
Whose heart has shar’d in all his splendid triumphs,  
And feels, ev’n now, his trait’rous deeds with pity ?  
But hence with pity, and the woman’s pangs :  
Resentment governs, and the queen shall punish.

*Enter BURLEIGH.*

*Bur.* Illustrious queen, the traitors all are seiz’d.  
Th’ intelligence was true. Their black debates  
Were held at Drury-house. The dire result  
Was this : that Essex should alarm the citizens  
To open mutiny, and bold rebellion.  
“ On this pernicious errand went the earl,  
“ Join’d by his desp’rate and seditious friends.”  
Their purpose was to seize your royal palace,  
And sacred person ; but your faithful people,  
As by one mind inform’d, one zeal inspir’d,  
Rose up at once, and with their virtue quell’d them.

*Qu.* Thanks to their honest, to their loyal hearts.  
But say, were any persons else concern’d,  
Of high distinction, or of noted rank ?

*Bur.* Yes, madam, many more, seduc’d of late,

'Mong whom the bold Southampton foremost stands,  
 "Precipitate and rash; whose pow'r tho' great,  
 "Lags far behind his will to do you hurt."  
 They're now our pris'ners, and are safe secur'd;  
 But Essex, with Southampton, and the rest  
 Of greater note, I would not dare dispose of  
 Without your royal mandate; and they now  
 Attend without, to know your final pleasure.

*Qu.* Is this the just return of all my care;  
 My anxious toilsome days, and watchful nights?  
 Have I sent forth a wish, that went not freighted  
 With all my people's good? Or, have I life,  
 Or length of days desir'd, but for their sake?  
 The public good is all my private care.  
 "Have I not ever thought the meanest subject,  
 "Oppress'd by power, was, in his just complaint,  
 "Above a king? What British bosom has  
 "By foreign tyranny been griev'd, whose wrongs  
 "I have not felt as mine, as mine redress'd?  
 "Or have I, justly, made a single man  
 "My foe?" Then could I think this grateful isle  
 Contain'd one traitor's heart? But, least of all,  
 That Essex' breast should lodge it? Call the monster,  
 And let me meet this rebel face to face.  
 Do you withdraw, and wait within our call.

[*Exeunt* BURLEIGH, &c.]

*Enter* ESSEX.

You see we dare abide your dang'rous presence,  
 Tho' treason sits within your heart enthron'd,

And on that brow rebellion lours, where once  
Such boasted loyalty was said to flourish.  
How low the traitor can degrade the soldier !  
Guilt glares in conscious dye upon thy cheek,  
And inward horror trembles in thine eye.  
How mean is fraud ! How base ingratitude !

*Essex.* Forbear reproach, thou injur'd majesty,  
Nor wound, with piercing looks, a heart already  
With anguish torn, and bleeding with remorse.  
Your awful looks, alone, are arm'd with death,  
And justice gives them terror.

*Qu.* Hapless man !

What cause could prompt, what fiend could urge  
thee on

To this detested deed ? Could I from thee  
Expect to meet this base return ? from thee,  
To whom I ought to fly, with all the confidence  
That giving bounty ever could inspire,  
Or seeming gratitude and worth could promise ?

*Essex.* Alas ! I own my crimes, and feel my trea-  
sons ;

They press me down beneath the reach of pity.  
Despair alone can shield me from myself.  
Oh, let the little space I live be curs'd  
With countless woes ; let death, unpitied, come ;  
“ My name be mention'd with the utmost scorn,”  
If all my life can feel, or fame can suffer,  
Can serve to mitigate my queen's displeasure.

*Qu.* My pride forbids me to approach thee more ;  
My pity, rather, would relieve thy sorrow.

"I see conviction, and severe remorse,  
 "Within thy mind at work. But much I fear,  
 "That death alone can calm the raging conflict."  
 The people's clamours and my special safety,  
 Call loud for justice, and demand your life.  
 But if forgiveness from an injur'd queen  
 Can make the few short hours you live more easy,  
 I give it freely from my pitying heart ;  
 And wish my willing power could grant thee more.

*Essex.* Oh, sounds angelic ! goodness undeserv'd !  
 My swelling heart can keep no bounds, my soul  
 Flows o'er.—And will my gracious queen forgive  
 me ?

Oh, let me prostrate thus before you fall,  
 My better angel ; and my guardian genius !  
 Permit me, royal mistress, to announce  
 My faithful sentiments, my soul's true dictates ;  
 Vouchsafe your Essex but this one request,  
 This only boon, he'll thank you with his last,  
 His dying breath, and bless you in his passage.

*Qu.* Rise, my lord.

If aught you have to offer can allay  
 Your woes, and reconcile you to your fate,  
 Proceed ;—and I with patient ear will listen.

*Essex.* My real errors, and my seeming crimes  
 Would weary mercy, and make goodness poor :  
 And yet the source of all my greatest faults  
 Was loyalty misled, and duty in extreme.  
 So jealous was my sanguine heart, so warm  
 Affection's zeal, I could not bear the least

Suspicion of my duty to my queen.

This drove me from my high command in Ireland ;  
This, too, impell'd me to that rude behaviour  
Which justly urg'd the shameful blow I felt ;  
And this (O, fatal rashness !) made me think  
My queen had given her Essex up, a victim  
To statesmen's schemes, and wicked policy.  
Stung by that piercing thought, my madness flew  
Beyond all bounds, and now, alas ! has brought me  
To this most shamefull fall ; and, what's still worse,  
My own reproaches, and my queen's displeasure.

*Qu.* Unhappy man ! My yielding soul is touch'd,  
And pity pleads thy cause within my breast.

*Essex.* Say but, my gracious sovereign, ere I go  
For ever from your presence, that you think me  
Guiltless of all attempts against your throne,  
And sacred life. Your faithful Essex ne'er  
Could harbour in his breast so foul a thought.  
Believe it not, my queen. By Heav'n, I swear,  
When in my highest pitch of glory rais'd,  
The splendid noon of fortune's brightest sun-shine,  
Not ages of renown could yield me half  
The joy, nor make my life so greatly blest,  
As saving yours, tho' for a single hour.

*Qu.* My lord, I think you honest. Nay, I own,  
Whatever coldness I put on, was meant  
To save you from the malice of your foes.  
I judg'd your crimes, what you yourself pronounc'd  
  'em,  
The rash effect of an intemp'rate zeal.

*Essex.* Was ever wretch like Essex thus undone  
By goodness in excess, and lavish'd grace !  
Oh, I could tear my erring heart, with these  
Revening hands !—What blessings have I lost !  
What clemency abus'd !—Now could I wish  
For lengthen'd life,—indeed for endless years.  
A whole eternity's too short, to shew  
My pious sorrows, and atone my folly.

*Qu.* “ Too well the passage to my heart he finds :  
“ And pity's hand lets in the dangerous guest.  
“ How weak is reason, when oppos'd to nature !”

[*Aside.*

My lord, I would convince you that I still  
Regard your life, and labour to preserve it ;  
But cannot screen you from a public trial.  
With prudence make your best defence : but should  
Severity her iron jurisdiction  
Extend too far, and give thee up condemn'd  
To angry laws, thy queen will not forget thee.  
Yet, lest you then shou'd want a faithful friend,  
(For friends will fly you in the time of need)  
Here, from my finger, take this ring, a pledge  
Of mercy ; having this, you ne'er shall need  
An advocate with me ; for whensoever  
You give, or send it back, by Heav'n, I swear,  
As I do hope for mercy on my soul,  
That I will grant whatever boon you ask.

*Essex.* Oh, grace surprising ! most amazing goodness !

Words cannot paint the transports of my soul !  
Let me receive it on my grateful knees,  
At once to thank and bless the hand that gives it.

*Qu.* Depend, my lord, on this ; 'twixt you and me  
This ring shall be a private mark of faith

*[Gives the ring.]*

Inviolatè. Be confident, chear up,  
Dispel each melancholy fear, and trust  
Your sovereign's promise ; she will ne'er forsake you.

*Essex.* Let Providence dispose my lot as 'twill,  
May watchful angels ever guard my queen ;  
May healing wisdom in her counsels reign,  
And firm fidelity surround her throne ;  
May victory her dreaded banners bear,  
And joyful conquests crown her soldiers' brow ;  
Let every bliss be mingled in her cup,  
And Heaven at last become her great reward ! *[Exit.]*

*Qu.* 'Tis done ;  
And yet foreboding tremors shake my heart.  
Something sits heavy here, and presses down  
My spirits with its weight. What can it mean ?  
Suppose he is condemn'd ; my royal word  
Is plighted for his life ; his enemies,  
No doubt, will censure much.—No matter ; let 'em ;  
I know him honest, and despise their malice.  
“ Unhappy state, where mercy and compassion  
“ Too often meet with clamour and reproach !  
“ But princes must endure, for public good,  
“ The narrow censures of misguiding crowds.”



*Enter Countess of Rutland.*

*Rut.* Where is the queen? I'll fall before her feet  
Prostrate, implore, besiege her royal heart,  
And force her to forgive.

*Qu.* What means this frenzy?

*Rut.* Oh, gracious queen, if ever pity touch'd  
Your generous breast, let not the cruel axe  
Destroy his precious life; preserve my Essex,  
"Preserve, from shameful death, the noble, loyal;  
"Oh, save the brave, the best of subjects.—Save"  
My life, my hope, my joy, "my all," my husband!

*Qu.* Husband!—What sudden deadly blow is this!  
Hold up, my soul, nor sink beneath this wound.  
You beg a traitor's life!

*Rut.* Oh, gracious queen!  
He ever lov'd—was ever faithful, brave—  
If nature dwells about your heart, Oh, spurn  
Me not! My lord! my love! my husband bleeds!

*Qu.* Take her away.

*Rut.* "I cannot let you go."  
"Hold off your hands"—Here on this spot I'll fix,  
Here lose all sense. Still let me stretch these arms,  
Inexorable queen! he yet may live.  
Oh, give him to my poor afflicted heart!  
One pitying look, to save me from distraction.

*Qu.* I'll hear no more. I'm tortur'd—take her  
hence.

*Rut.* Nay, force me not away.—Inhuman wretches!  
Oh, mercy, mercy!—Then to thee, good Heav'n,  
(My queen, my cruel queen, denies to hear me)

To thee I call, to thee for mercy bend.  
Melt down her bosom's frozen sense to feel  
Some portion of my deadly grief, my fell  
Distraction.—Turn, Oh, turn, and see a wife,  
A tortur'd wife——

*Qu.* Why am I not obey'd ?

*Rut.* Nay, do not thus  
Abandon me to fell despair. Just Heaven,  
That sees my sorrows, will avenge the wrong,  
This cruel wrong, this barbarous tyranny. [*Forced off.*]

*Qu.* Wedded to Rutland! Most unhappy pair!  
And, Oh, ill-fated queen! Never till now  
Did sorrow settle in my heart its throne.  
Now black despair its cloudy curtain draws  
Around thy setting peace, where joy, alas!  
No more shall dawn, nor smiling hope return.  
Recall my pledge of safety from his hands,  
And give him up to death!——But life or death  
To me is equal now. “Distraction dwells  
“Within my tortur'd soul, and furies rend it.”  
Unhappy state, where peace shall never come!  
One fatal moment has confirm'd my doom,  
Turn'd all my comfort to intestine strife,  
And fill'd with mortal pangs my future life. [*Exit.*]

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ACT V. SCENE I.

*Enter RALEIGH and Lieutenant of the Tower.*

*Raleigh.*

THEIR peers, with much indulgence, heard their plea,  
And gave them ample scope for their defence ;  
But nought avail'd, their crimes were too notorious.  
They bore their sentence with becoming spirit ;  
And here's the royal mandate for their deaths.  
The lady Nottingham!—What brings her hither ?

*Enter Lady NOTTINGHAM.*

*Not.* Lieutenant, lead me to the Earl of Essex,  
I bring a message to him from the queen.

*Lieut.* He's with his friend, the brave Southamp-  
ton, madam,

Preparing now for his expected fate.

But I'll acquaint his lordship with your pleasure. [*Ex*

*Ral.* What means this message ? Does the queen  
relent ?

*Not.* I fear she does : “ for such a war of passions,  
“ Such varying tumults never strove within  
“ Her breast till now. Sometimes she rails at Essex,  
“ And calls him villain, traitor, dooms him dead ;  
“ Yet, in a moment, turns again to pity.  
“ At length she sent me to th' ungrateful earl,  
“ To learn if he could offer aught that might  
“ Induce her royal mercy to forgiveness.”

Go you to court, for Cecil there expects you.  
I've promis'd to acquaint him with what passes  
'Twixt me and Essex ere I see the queen.

*Ral.* Madam, I go.

[*Exit.*

*Not.* Now, vengeance, steel my heart!  
Offended woman, whilst her pride remains,  
To malice only and revenge will bow,  
And every virtue at that altar sacrifice.  
But see, he comes, with manly sorrow clad.  
There was a time, that presence cou'd subdue  
My pride, and melt my heart to gentle pity.  
I then could find no joy but in his smiles;  
And thought him lovely as the summer's bloom;  
But all his beauties are now hateful grown.

*Enter Essex.*

*Essex.* Whether you bring me death or life I know  
not.

But, if strict friendship and remembrance past  
May aught presage to my afflicted heart,  
Sure mercy only from those lips should flow,  
And grace be utter'd from that friendly tongue.

*Not.* My lord, I'm glad you think me still your  
friend.

I come not to upbraid but serve you now;  
And pleas'd I am to be the messenger  
Of such glad tidings, in the day of trouble,  
As now I bring you. When the queen had heard  
That by the lords you were condemn'd to die,  
She sent me, in her mercy, here, to know

If you had aught to offer that might move  
Her royal clemency to spare your life.

*Essex.* Could any circumstance new lustre add  
To my dread sovereign's goodness, 'tis the making  
The kind, the generous Nottingham its messenger.  
Oh, madam! could my glowing heart express  
Its grateful sentiments, 'twould speak such language  
As angels utter, when they praise their Maker.

*Not.* 'Tis well, my lord; but there's no time to  
spare,

The queen impatient waits for my return.

*Essex.* My heart was wishing for some faithful friend,  
And bounteous Heav'n hath sent thee to my hopes.  
Know then, kind Nottingham, for now I'll trust  
Thee with the dearest secret of my life;  
'Tis not long since the queen (who well foresaw  
To what the malice of my foes would drive me)  
Gave me this ring, this sacred pledge of mercy;  
And with it made a solemn vow to Heav'n,  
That, whensoever I should give or send  
It back again, she'd freely grant whate'er  
Request I then shou'd make.

*Not.* Give, give it me,

My lord, and let me fly on friendship's wings,  
To bear it to the queen, and to it add  
My prayers and influence to preserve thy life.

*Essex.* O! take it then—it is the pledge of life,  
The precious spring that drives my vital stream  
Around, and keeps my heart still warm: "it is  
"The door of breath, the hope of joy, the shield

"Of friendship."—O! it is my dear Southampton's  
Last, last remaining stay, his thread of being,  
Which more than words I prize.—O, take it then,  
Take it, thou guardian angel of my life,  
And offer up the incense of my pray'r!  
O beg, intreat, implore her majesty,  
From public shame, and ignominious death,  
And from th' obdurate axe, to save my friend.

*Not.* My lord, with all the powers that nature gave,  
And friendship can inspire, I'll urge the queen  
To grant you your request.

*Essex.* Kind Nottingham,  
Your pious offices shall ever be  
My fervent theme; and if my doubtful span  
Relenting Heav'n should stretch to years remote,  
Each passing hour shall still remind my thoughts,  
And tell me that I owe my all to thee:  
My friend shall thank you too for lengthen'd life.  
And now I fly with comfort to his arms,  
To let him know the mercy that you bring. [*Exit.*

"*Not.* Yes, you shall feel my friendship's weight  
fall heavy

"Upon your guilty soul, ungrateful man!

"Your false, disdainful heart shall pay the fine

"Of love neglected, and of beauty scorn'd." [*Exit.*

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## SCENE II.

*The Court. Enter QUEEN and BURLEIGH.*

*Qu.* Ha! is not Nottingham return'd?

*Bur.* No, Madam.

*Qu.* Dispatch a speedy messenger to haste her.  
My agitated heart can find no rest.  
So near the brink of fate—unhappy man !

*Enter* NOTTINGHAM.

How now, my Nottingham, what news from Essex ?  
What says the earl ?

*Not.* I wish, with all my soul,  
Th' ungrateful task had been another's lot.  
I dread to tell it—lost, ill-fated man !

*Qu.* What means this mystery, this strange behaviour ?

Pronounce—declare at once ; what said the earl ?

*Not.* Alas, my queen, I fear to say ; his mind  
Is in the strangest mood, that ever pride  
On blackest thoughts begot. He scarce would speak ;  
And when he did, it was with sullenness,  
With hasty tone, and down-cast look.

*Qu.* Amazing !

Not feel the terrors of approaching death !  
Nor yet the joyful dawn of promis'd life !

*Not.* He rather seem'd insensible to both,  
And with a cold indifference heard your offer ;  
Till warming up, by slow degrees, resentment  
Began to swell his restless, haughty mind,  
And proud disdain provok'd him to exclaim  
Aloud, against the partial power of fortune,  
And faction's rage. I begg'd him to consider

His sad condition, nor repulse with scorn  
The only hand that could preserve him.

*Qu.* Ha !

What ! Said he nothing of a private import ?  
No circumstance—no pledge—no ring ?

*Not.* None, madam,  
But with contemptuous front disclaim'd at once  
Your proffer'd grace ; and scorn'd, he said, a life  
Upon such terms bestow'd.

*Qu.* Impossible !  
Could Essex treat me thus ? You basely wrong him,  
And wrest his meaning from the purpos'd point.  
Recall betimes the horrid words you've utter'd ;  
Confess, and own the whole you've said was false.

*Not.* Madam, by truth, and duty both compell'd,  
Against the pleadings of my pitying soul,  
I must declare (Heav'n knows with what reluctance)  
That never pride insulted mercy more.  
He ran o'er all the dangers he had past ;  
His mighty deeds ; his service to the state ;  
Accus'd your majesty of partial leaning  
To favourite lords, to whom he falls a sacrifice ;  
Appeals to justice, and to future times,  
How much he feels from proud oppression's arm :  
Nay, something too he darkly hinted at,  
Of jealous disappointment, and revenge.

*Qu.* Eternal silence seal thy venom'd lips !  
What hast thou utter'd, wretch, to rouse at once  
A whirlwind in my soul, which roots up pity,  
And destroys my peace ?



“ Ha ! he defies me then ! Audacious traitor ! ”  
 Let him this instant to the block be led. [*Exit* Not.  
 Upbraid me with my fatal fondness for him !  
 Ungrateful, barbarous ruffian ! Oh, Elizabeth !  
 Remember now thy long establish’d fame,  
 Thy envy’d glory, and thy father’s spirit.  
 Accuse me of injustice too, and cruelty !  
 Yes, I’ll this instant to the Tower, forget  
 My regal state, and to his face confront him :  
 Confound th’ audacious villain with my presence,  
 And add new terrors to th’ uplifted axe. [*Exit.*

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SCENE III.

*The Tower. ESSEX and SOUTHAMPTON discovered.*

*Essex.* Oh, name it not ! my friend shall live, he  
 shall ;

I know her royal mercy, and her goodness,  
 Will give you back to life, to length of days,  
 And me to honour, loyalty, and truth.  
 Death is still distant far.

*South.* In life’s first spring  
 Our green affections grew apace and prosper’d ;  
 The genial summer swell’d our joyful hearts,  
 To meet and mix each growing fruitful wish.  
 We’re now embark’d upon that stormy flood  
 Where all the wise and brave are gone before us,  
 Ere since the birth of time, to meet eternity.  
 And what is death, did we consider right ?

Shall we, who sought him in the paths of terror,  
And fac'd him in the dreadful walks of war,  
Shall we astonish'd shrink, like frightened infants,  
And start at scaffolds, and their gloomy trappings ?

*Essex.* Yet, still I trust long years remain of friendship.

Let smiling hope drive doubt and fear away,  
And death be banish'd far ; where creeping age,  
Disease, and care, invite him to their dwelling.  
I feel assurance rise within my breast,  
That all will yet be well.

*South.* Count not on hope——

We never can take leave, my friend, of life,  
On nobler terms. Life ! what is life ? A shadow !  
Its date is but th' immediate breath we draw ;  
Nor have we surety for a second gale ;  
Ten thousand accidents in ambush lie  
For the embody'd dream.

A frail and fickle tenement it is,  
Which, like the brittle glass that measures time,  
Is often broke, ere half its sands are run.

*Essex.* Such cold philosophy the heart disdains,  
And friendship shudders at the moral tale.  
My friend, the fearful precipice is past,  
And danger dare not meet us more. Fly swift,  
Ye better angels, waft the welcome tidings  
Of pardon to my friend ; of life and joy.

*Enter Lieutenant.*

*Lieut.* I grieve to be the messenger of woe,

But must, my lords, intreat you to prepare  
For instant death. Here is the royal mandate  
That orders your immediate execution.

*Essex.* Immediate execution!—What, so sudden!  
No message from the queen, or Nottingham?

*Lieut.* None, sir.

*Essex.* Deluded hopes! Oh, worse than death!  
Perfidious queen, to make a mock of life!  
My friend, my friend destroy'd! Oh! piercing  
thought!

Oh, dismal chance!—In my destruction ruin'd!  
In my sad fall undone! Why could not mine,  
My life atone for both; my blood appease?  
Can you, my friend, forgive me?

*South.* Yes, O yes,  
My bosom's better half, I can.—With thee,  
I'll gladly seek the coast unknown, and leave  
The lessening mark of irksome life behind.  
With thee, my friend, 'tis joy to die! 'tis glory!  
For who would wait the tardy stroke of time,  
Or cling, like reptiles, to the verge of being,  
When we can bravely leap from life at once,  
And spring triumphant in a friend's embrace?

*Enter RALEIGH.*

*Ral.* To you, my lord Southampton, from the queen  
A pardon comes: your life her mercy spares.

*Essex.* For ever blest be that indulgent power  
Which saves my friend! This weight ta'en off, my soul  
Shall upward spring, and mingle with the blest.

*South.* All-ruling Heavens, can this, can this be just ?

Support me ; hold, ye straining heart strings, hold,  
And keep my sinking frame from dissolution.  
Oh, 'tis too much for mortal strength to bear,  
Or thought to suffer ! No, I'll die with thee.  
They shall not part us, Essex.

*Essex.* Live, Oh, live,  
Thou noblest, bravest, best of men and friends,  
Whilst life is worth thy wish, 'till time and thou  
Agree to part, and nature send thee to me ;  
Thou gen'rous soul, farewell !—Live, and be happy ;  
And, Oh ! may life make largely up to thee  
Whatever blessing fate has thus cut off  
From thy departing friend !

*Lieut.* My lord, my warrant  
Strictly forbids to grant a moment's time.

*South.* Oh, must we part for ever ?—Cruel fortune !  
Wilt thou then tear him hence ?—"Severe divorce !"  
Let me cling round thy sacred person still,  
Still clasp thee to my bosom close, and keep  
Stern fate at distance.

*Essex.* Oh, my friend, we'll meet  
Again, where virtue finds a just reward,  
Where factious malice never more can reach us.  
Recall thy reason, be thyself once more.—  
I fear it not.—This hideous monster, death,  
When seen at distance, shocks weak nature's eye ;  
But reason, as it draws more near, defies it.—  
I thank thy sorrows, but cou'd spare 'em now.

I need not bid thee guard my fame from wrongs :  
 And, Oh ! a dearer treasure to thy care  
 I trust, than either life or fame—my wife !  
 Her bitter sorrows pierce my soul ; for her  
 My heart drops blood !—Oh, she will want a friend !  
 Then take her to thy care ; do thou pour balm  
 On her deep-wounded spirit, and let her find  
 My tender helps in thee.—I must be gone,  
 My ever faithful, and my gallant friend.—  
 I pr'ythee leave this woman's work.—Farewell !—  
 Take this last, dear embrace.—Farewell for ever !

*South.* My bursting breast ! I fain would speak,  
 but words

Are poor——Farewell !——

But we shall meet again, embrace in one  
 Eternal band, which never shall be loos'd. [*Exit.*

*Essex.* To death's concluding stroke, lead on, Lieu-  
 tenant.

My wife !—Now reason, fortitude, support me !  
 For now, indeed, comes on my sorest trial.

*Enter Countess of RUTLAND.*

Oh, thou last, dear reserve of fortune's malice !  
 For fate can add no more—Oh, com'st thou then  
 In this dread hour, when all my straining thoughts  
 Are struggling in the tenderest ties of nature !  
 Oh, com'st thou now t' arrest my parting soul,  
 And force it back to life !

*Rut.* Thou sole delight,  
 Thou only joy which life cou'd ever give,

Or death deprive me of ; my wedded lord !  
I come, with thee determin'd to endure  
The utmost rigour of our angry stars ;  
To join thee, fearless, in the grasp of death,  
And seek some dwelling in a world beyond it.

*Essex.* Too much, thou partner of this dismal hour,  
Thy gen'rous soul would prompt thee to endure ;  
Nor can thy tender, trembling heart sustain it.  
Long years of bliss remain in store for thee ;  
And smiling time his treasures shall unfold  
To bribe thy stay !

*Rut.* Thou cruel comforter !  
Alas ! what's life, what's hated life to me :  
" Can aught beneath this starry hemisphere,  
" Which earth's extent, and nature's wealth can yield,  
" Which proud ambition stretches to enjoy,  
" Or passion pants for, recompense thy loss ?"  
Alas ! this universe, this goodly frame,  
Shall all as one continued curse appear,  
And every object blast, when thou art gone.

*Essex.* Oh, strain not thus the little strength I've left,  
The weak support that holds up life, to bear  
A few short moments more, its weight of woe,  
Its loss of thee. Oh, turn away those eyes,  
Nor with that look melt down my fix'd resolve ;  
And yet a little longer let me gaze  
On that lov'd form. Alas ! I feel my sight  
Grows dim, and reason from her throne retires ;  
For pity's sake, let go my breaking heart,  
And leave me to my fate.

*Rut.* Why wilt thou still

Of parting talk, since life its thousand gates  
Unbars to let us through together? "Death  
"Is but a step that reaches to eternity."

Oh, that the friendly hand of Heav'n wou'd snatch  
Us both at once, above the distant stars,  
Where fortune's venom'd shafts can never pierce,  
Nor cruel queens destroy!—"Nay, look not so."

*Essex.* The awful Searcher, whose impartial eye  
Explores the secrets of each human heart,  
And every thought surveys, can witness for me,  
How close thy image clings around my soul:  
Retards each rising wish, and draws me back  
To life, entangled by that lov'd idea.  
When fell necessity those ties shall break,  
For quickly break they must——. When I from earth  
On faith's white angel wings to Heaven shall soar,  
Thy lasting form shall still my mind possess,  
Where bliss supreme each faculty o'erwhelms,  
And raptur'd angels glow.

*Lieut.* My lord, "the time  
"Too far is stretch'd;" it now grows late.

*Essex.* Lead on.

*Rut.* Stay, stay, my love! my dearest, dying lord!  
Ah, whither wouldst thou go? Ah, do not leave me!  
Alas! I'll hasten to attend your flight;  
And nature gives consent we should not part.  
I feel each faculty for fate prepare,  
And my quick soul wou'd fain set out before you.  
"Oh, precious pangs!—Oh, dear distress! still closer

"To thy quick throbbing heart let mine complain,  
 "And on thy labouring bosom breathe my last!"

[Faints.

*Essex.* Thou sinking excellence! thou matchless woman!

Shall fortune rob me of thy dear embrace,  
 Or earth's whole power, or death divide us now!  
 Stay, stay, thou spotless, injur'd saint, and take—

*Lieut.* My lord, already you have been indulg'd  
 Beyond what I can warrant by my orders.

*Essex.* Oh, let me on her dying bosom fall,  
 Embrace her spotless form!—One moment more  
 Afford me to my sorrows—Oh, look there!  
 Cou'd bitter anguish pierce your heart, like mine,  
 You'd pity now the mortal pangs I feel,  
 The throbs that tear my vital strings away,  
 And rend my agonizing soul.

*Lieut.* My lord—

*Essex.* But one short moment, and I will attend.  
 Ye sacred ministers that virtue guard,  
 And shield the righteous in the paths of peril,  
 Restore her back to life, and lengthen'd years  
 Of joy; dry up her bleeding sorrows all!  
 Oh, cancel from her thoughts this dismal hour,  
 And blot my image from her sad remembrance!  
 'Tis done.—

And now, ye trembling cords of life, give way:  
 Nature and time, let go your hold; eternity  
 Demands me.

[Exit Essex and Lieutenant.

"Woman. She returns to life; see! help!"



*Rut.* Where has my lost, benighted soul been wand'ring?

What means this mist that hangs about my mind,  
Through which reflection's painful eye discerns  
Imperfect forms, and horrid shapes of woe?  
The cloud dispels, the shades withdraw, and all  
My dreadful fate appears.—Oh, where's my lord,  
My life! my Essex! Oh, whither have they ta'en  
him?

*Enter QUEEN and Attendants.*

*Qu.* To execution! Fly with light'ning's wing,  
And save him. "Ha! by whose command was this?  
"Stop, stop the fatal blow.—My fears were true."  
[Exit one of the attendants.

*Rut.* Thou saving angel, sent from Heav'n! my  
queen,  
My gracious queen, "be quick!—the bloody Bur-  
leigh!

"A moment may destroy him! Stretch thy arm,  
"Defend, defend!" O, snatch him from the blow!  
Preserve my husband! "O, Elizabeth,  
"Look down upon me. Angels move her heart  
"To pity; save him, save him, gracious queen!"

*Qu.* Be calm, he shall not die. Rise up. I came  
To save his life.

*Rut.* 'Tis mercy's voice that speaks.  
My Essex shall again be mine. My queen,  
My bounteous, gracious queen, has said the word.  
May troops of angels guard thy sacred life,

And, in thy latest moments, waft thy soul  
To meet that mercy in the realms of joy,  
Which now thy royal goodness grants to me !

*Enter BURLEIGH.*

*Bur.* Madam, your orders came, alas ! too late.  
Ere they arriv'd the axe had fallen on Essex.

*Rut.* Ha ! dead ! What hell is this that opens round  
me ?

What fiend art thou that draws the horrid scene ?  
Ah, Burleigh ! bloody murd'rer, where's my husband !

" Oh ! where's my lord, my Essex ?"  
Destruction seize and madness rend my brain !  
See, see, they bend him to the fatal block ;  
Now, now the horrid axe is lifted high,  
It falls, it falls ; he bleeds, he bleeds ; he dies !

*Qu.* Alas, her sorrows pierce my suffering heart.

*Rut.* Eternal discord, tear the social world,  
" And nature's laws dissolve ! expunge, erase  
" The hated marks of time's engraving hand,  
" And every trace destroy !" Arise, despair,  
" Assert thy rightful claim," possess me all !  
Bear, bear me to my murder'd lord, to clasp  
His bleeding body in my dying arms,  
And in the tomb embrace his dear remains,  
And mingle with his dust for ever. [*Exit.*

*Qu.* Hapless woman !  
She shall henceforth be partner of my sorrows ;  
And we'll contend who most shall weep for Essex.

Oh, quick to kill, and ready to destroy, [To Bur.  
 Cou'd no pretext be found, no cause appear,  
 To lengthen mercy out a moment more,  
 And stretch the span of grace? Oh, cruel Burleigh!  
 This, this was thy dark work, unpitied man!

*Bur.* My gracious mistress, blame not thus my duty,  
 My firm obedience to your high command.  
 The laws condemn'd him first to die; nor think  
 I stood between your mercy and his life.  
 It was the lady Nottingham, not I.  
 Herself confess'd it all in wild despair,  
 That from your majesty to Essex sent,  
 With terms of proffer'd grace, she then receiv'd  
 From his own hand a fatal ring, a pledge  
 It seems of much importance, which the earl  
 With earnest suit, and warm entreaty, begg'd her,  
 As she would prize his life, to give your majesty.  
 In this she fail'd—In this she murder'd Essex.

*Qu.* Oh, barbarous woman!  
 Surrounded still by treachery and fraud!  
 "What bloody deed is this! Thou injur'd Essex!"  
 My fame is soil'd to all succeeding times:  
 But Heav'n alone can view my breaking heart;  
 Then let its will be done.—

From hence, let proud, resisting mortals know  
 The arm parental, and the indulgent blow.  
 To Heaven's corrective rod submissive bend;  
 Adore its wisdom, on its power depend;  
 Whilst ruling justice guides eternal sway,  
 Let nature tremble, and let man obey.

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## EPILOGUE.

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BY AN UNKNOWN HAND.

Spoken originally by Mrs. CIBBER.

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*NEWS! News! good folks, rare news, and you shall  
know it.—*

*I've got intelligence about our poet.*

*Who do you think he is?—You'll never guess;*

*An Irish Bricklayer, neither more nor less.*

*And now the secret's out, you cannot wonder,  
That in commencing bard he made a blunder.*

*Has he not left the better for the worse,*

*In quitting solid brick for empty verse?*

*Can he believe th' example of Old Ben,*

*Who chang'd, like him, the trowel for the pen,*

*Will in his favour move your critic bowels?—*

*You rather wish, most poets pens were trowels.*

*One man is honest, sensible, and plain,*

*Nor has the poet made him pert, in vain:*

*No beau, no courtier, nor conceited youth;*

*But then so rude, he always speaks the truth:*

*I told him he must flatter, learn address,*

*And gain the heart of some rich patroness:*

*'Tis she, said I, your labours will reward,*

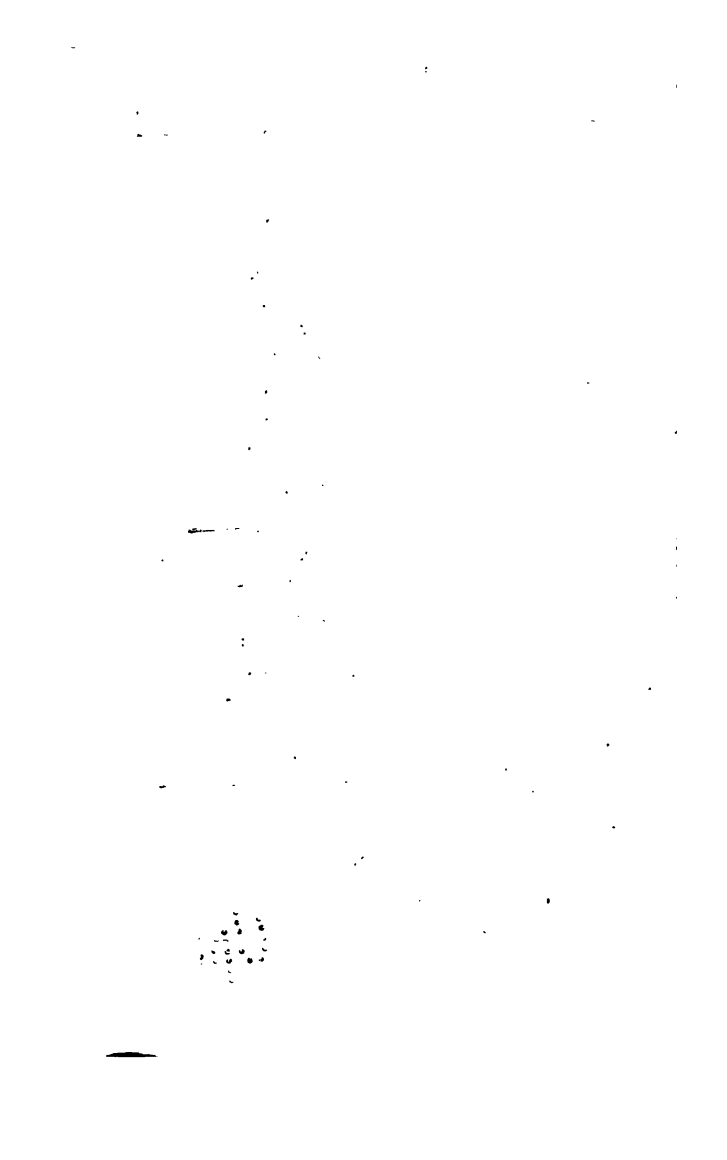
*If you but join the bricklayer with the bard;*

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*As thus——Should she be old and worse for wear,  
You must new-case her, front her, and repair;  
If crack'd in fame, as scarce to bear a touch,  
You cannot use your trowel then too much;  
In short, whate'er her morals, age, or station,  
Plaister and white-wash in your dedication.  
Thus I advis'd—but he detests the plan:  
What can be done with such a simple man?  
A poet's nothing worth and nought availing,  
Unless he'll furnish where there is a failing.  
Authors in these good times are made and us'd,  
To grant these favours nature has refus'd.  
If he won't fib, what bounty can he crave?  
We pay for what we want, not what we have.——  
Nay, tho' of ev'ry blessing we have store,  
Our sex will always wish——a little more.——  
If he'll not bend his heart to this his duty,  
And sell, to who will buy, wit, honour, beauty;  
The bricklayer still for him the proper trade is,  
Too rough to deal with gentlemen and ladies.——  
In short, they'll all avoid him, and neglect him,  
Unless that you, his patrons, will protect him.*

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THE END.



# JANE SHORE.

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A

TRAGEDY.

By N. ROWE, Esq.

ADAPTED FOR

*THEATRICAL REPRESENTATION,*

AS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRES-ROYAL,  
DRURY-LANE AND COVENT-GARDEN.

REGULATED FROM THE PROMPT-BOOKS,

*By Permission of the Managers.*

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*"The Lines distinguished by inverted Commas, are omitted in the Representation."*

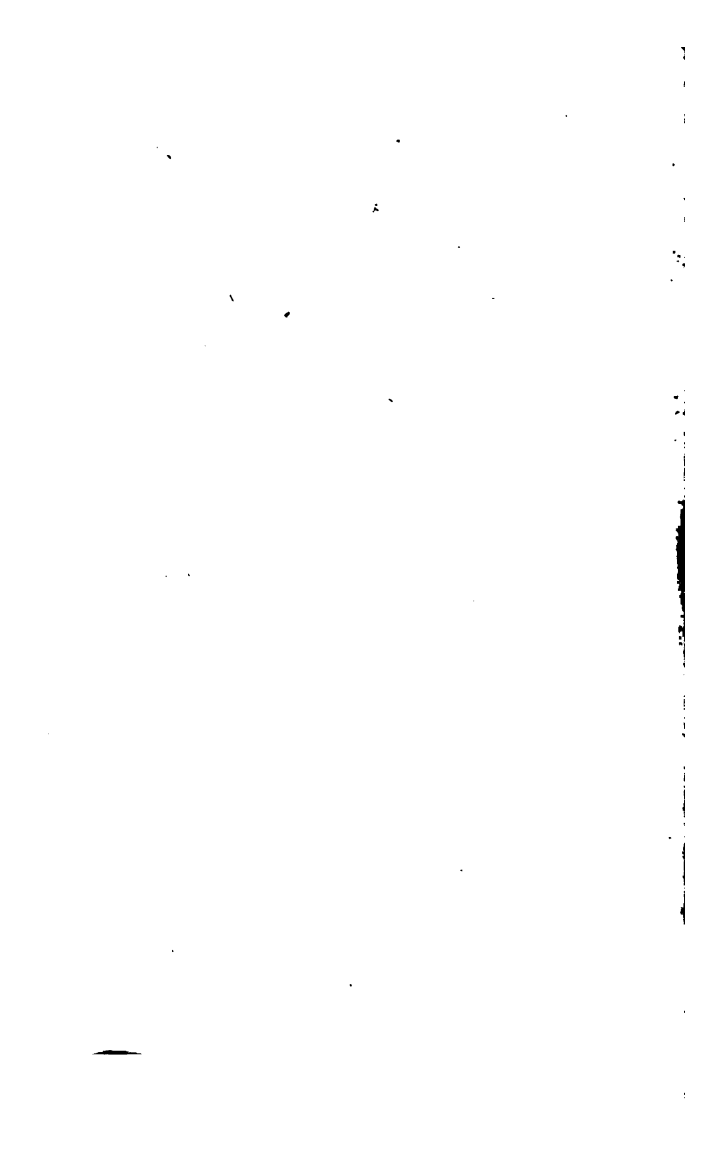
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MDCCLXII.





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TO  
HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF  
**QUEENSBERRY AND DOVER,**  
**MARQUIS OF BEVERLEY, &c.**

---

MY LORD,

*I HAVE long lain under the greatest obligation to your Grace's family, and nothing has been more in my wishes, than that I might be able to discharge some part, at least, of so large a debt. But your noble birth and fortune, the power, number, and goodness of those friends you have already, have placed you in such an independency on the rest of the world, that the services I am able to render to your Grace, can never be advantageous, I am sure not necessary, to you in any part of your life. However, the next piece of gratitude, and the only one I am capable of, is the acknowledgment of what I owe: and as this is the most public, and indeed the only way I have of doing it, your Grace will pardon me, if I take this opportunity, to let the world know the duty and honour I had for your illustrious father. It is, I must confess, a very tender point to touch upon; and at the first sight, may seem an ill-chosen compliment, to renew the memory of such a loss, especially to a disposition so sweet and gentle, and to a heart so sensible of filial piety, as your Grace's has been, even*

*from your earliest childhood. But perhaps, this is one of those griefs, by which the heart may be made better; and if the remembrance of his death bring heaviness along with it, the honour that is paid to his memory by all good men, shall wipe away those tears, and the example of his life, set before your eyes, shall be of the greatest advantage to your Grace, in the conduct and future disposition of your own.*

*In a character so amiable, as that of the Duke of Queensberry was, there can be no part so proper to begin with, as that which was in him, and is in all good men, the foundation of all other virtues, either religious or civil, I mean good-nature: Good-nature, which is friendship between man and man, good-breeding in courts, charity in religion, and the true spring of all beneficence in general. This was a quality he possessed in as great a measure as any gentleman I ever had the honour to know. It was this natural sweetness of temper, which made him the best man in the world to live with, in any kind of relation. It was this made him a good master to his servants, a good friend to his friends, and the tenderest father to his children. For the last, I can have no better voucher than your Grace; and for the rest, I may appeal to all that have had the honour to know him. There was a spirit and pleasure in his conversation, which always enlivened the company he was in; which, together with a certain easiness*

*and frankness in his disposition, that did not at all derogate from the dignity of his birth and character, rendered him infinitely agreeable. And as no man had a more delicate taste of natural wit, his conversation always abounded in good-humour.*

*For those parts of his character which related to the public, as he was a nobleman of the first rank, and a minister of state, they will be best known by the great employments he passed through; all which he discharged worthily as to himself, justly to the princes who employed him, and advantageously for his country. There is no occasion to enumerate his several employments, as secretary of state, for Scotland in particular, for Britain in general, or lord high commissioner of Scotland; which last office he bore more than once; but at no time more honourably, and (as I hope) more happily, both for the present age and for posterity, than when he laid the foundation for the British Union. The constancy and address which he manifested on that occasion, are still fresh in every body's memory; and perhaps when our children shall reap those benefits from that work, which some people do not foresee and hope for now, they may remember the Duke of Queensberry with that gratitude, which such a piece of service done to his country deserves.*

*He shewed, upon all occasions, a strict and im-*

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*mediate attachment to the crown, in the legal service of which, no man could exert himself more dutifully, nor more strenuously: and at the same time, no man gave more bold and more generous evidences of the love he bore to his country. Of the latter, there can be no better proof, than the share he had in the late happy Revolution; nor of the former, than that dutiful respect, and unshaken fidelity, which he preserved for her present majesty, even to his last moments.*

*With so many good and great qualities, it is not at all strange that he possessed so large a share, as he was known to have, in the esteem of the queen, and her immediate predecessor; nor that those great princes should repose the highest confidence in him: and at the same time, what a pattern has he left behind him for the nobility in general, and for your Grace in particular, to copy after!*

*Your Grace will forgive me, if my zeal for your welfare and honour (which nobody has more at heart than myself) shall press you with some more than ordinary warmth to the imitation of your noble father's virtues. You have, my lord, many great advantages, which may encourage you to go on in pursuit of this reputation: it has pleased God to give you naturally that sweetness of temper, which, as I have before hinted, is the foundation of all good inclina-*

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tions. You have the honour to be born, not only of the greatest, but of the best parents; of a gentleman generally beloved, and generally lamented; and of a lady adorned with all virtues that enter into the character of a good wife, an admirable friend, and a most indulgent mother. The natural advantages of your mind, have been cultivated by the most proper arts and manners of education. You have the care of many noble friends, and especially of an excellent uncle, to watch over you in the tenderness of your youth. You set out amongst the first of mankind, and I doubt not but your virtues will be equal to the dignity of your rank.

*That I may live to see your Grace eminent for the love of your country, for your service and duty to your prince, and, in convenient time, adorned with all the honours that have ever been conferred upon your noble family: that you may be distinguished to posterity, as the bravest, greatest, and best man of the age you live in, is the hearty wish and prayer of*

*My Lord,*

*Your Grace's most obedient, and*

*most faithful, humble servant,*

*N. ROWE.*

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## JANE SHORE.

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THIS Play is attractive upon various accounts—It presents a familiar picture of well-known events, treated with much delicacy and skill—and its moral use is also great, as exemplifying upon the fickleness of high fortune, and the gloomy proof, that the friendship which courts the summer of prosperity is blighted by the winter of adversity.

But ROWE never suffered a stronger delusion of the mind than that, which whispered to him, that his Play bore a resemblance to the weightier productions of SHAKSPERE. ROWE is not without his strength of sentiment—he can express an axiom of policy or morals nervously, and with considerable splendour; but the reflex picture of the mind, the labouring progression of thought, or the retrospective anguish of guilty compunction, are all beyond his grasp.—He is little accustomed to the inward search after natural feeling, and the self-imposed state of artificial being—He studied Books, rather than MAN in *himself*.

Yet there are tender and soothing passages in this Play—there is a well apposed succession of striking

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events, that interest-as they are embellished facts, and have a merit that would make them interest even if they were fictitious.

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## PROLOGUE.

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*To-night, if you have brought your good old taste,  
We'll treat you with a downright English feast :  
A tale, which told long since in homely wise,  
Hath never fail'd of melting gentle eyes.  
Let no nice sir despise our hapless dame,  
Because recording ballads chaunt her name ;  
Those venerable ancient song-enditers  
Soar'd many a pitch above our modern writers :  
They caterwaul'd in no romantic ditty,  
Sighing for Phillis's, or Chloe's pity.  
Justly they drew the fair, and spoke her plain,  
And sung her by her christian name—'twas Jane.  
Our numbers may be more refin'd than those,  
But what we've gain'd in verse, we've lost in prose.  
Their words no shuffling, double-meaning knew,  
Their speech was homely, but their hearts were true.  
In such an age, immortal Shakspeare wrote,  
By no quaint rules, nor hampering critics taught ;  
With rough majestic force he mov'd the heart,  
And strength and nature made amends for art.  
Our humble author does his steps pursue,  
He owns he had the mighty bard in view ;  
And in these scenes has made it more his care,  
To rouse the passions, than to charm the ear.*



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*Yet for those gentle beaux, who love the chime,  
The ends of acts still jingle into rhyme.  
The ladies too, he hopes, will not complain,  
Here are some subjects for a softer strain,  
A nymph forsaken, and a perjur'd swain.  
What most he fears, is, lest the dames should frown,  
The dames of wit and pleasure about town,  
To see our picture drawn unlike their own.  
But lest that error should provoke to fury  
The hospitable hundreds of old Drury,  
He bid me say, in our Jane Shore's defence,  
She dole'd about the charitable pence,  
Built hospitals, turn'd saint, and dy'd long since.  
For her example, whatsoe'er we make it,  
They have their choice to let alone or take it.  
Tho' few, as I conceive, will think it meet,  
To weep so sorely, for a sin so sweet:  
Or mourn and mortify the pleasant sense,  
To rise in tragedy two ages hence.*

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## Dramatis Personae.

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### DRURY-LANE.

#### *Men.*

Duke of GLOSTER,	-	-	-	-	Mr. Aickin.
Lord HASTINGS,	-	-	-	-	Mr. Kemble.
CATESBY,	-	-	-	-	Mr. Phillimore.
Sir RICHARD RATCLIFFE,	-	-	-	-	Mr. Benson.
BELMOUR,	-	-	-	-	Mr. Packer.
DUMONT,	-	-	-	-	Mr. Bensley.

#### *Women.*

ALICIA,	-	-	-	-	Mrs. Ward.
JANE SHORE,	-	-	-	-	Mrs. Siddons.

*Several lords of the council, guards, and attendants.*

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### COVENT-GARDEN.

#### *Men.*

Duke of GLOSTER,	-	-	-	-	Mr. Aickin.
Lord HASTINGS,	-	-	-	-	Mr. Holman.
CATESBY,	-	-	-	-	Mr. Thompson.
Sir RICHARD RATCLIFFE,	-	-	-	-	Mr. Gardner.
BELMOUR,	-	-	-	-	Mr. Hull.
DUMONT,	-	-	-	-	Mr. Farren.
DERBY,	-	-	-	-	Mr. Evatt.
Servant,	-	-	-	-	Mr. Ledger.

#### *Women.*

ALICIA,	-	-	-	-	Miss Brunton.
JANE SHORE,	-	-	-	-	Mrs. Pope.

*Several lords of the council, guards, and attendants.*

*SCENE, London.*

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## JANE SHORE.

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### ACT I. SCENE I.

*The Tower. Enter the Duke of GLOCESTER, Sir  
RICHARD RATCLIFFE, and CATESBY.*

*Glocester.*

**T**HUS far success attends upon our councils,  
And each event has answer'd to my wish ;  
The queen and all her upstart race are quell'd ;  
Dorset is banish'd, and her brother Rivers,  
Ere this, lies shorter by the head at Pomfret.  
The nobles have, with joint concurrence, nam'd me  
Protector of the realm. My brother's children,  
Young Edward and the little York, are lodg'd  
Here, safe within the Tower. How say you, sirs,  
Does not this business wear a lucky face ?  
The sceptre and the golden wreath of royalty  
Seem hung within my reach.

*Rat.* Then take 'em to you,  
And wear 'em long and worthily. You are

The last remaining male of princely York,  
(For Edward's boys, the state esteems not of them,)  
And therefore on your sov'reignty and rule,  
The common-weal does her dependence make,  
And leans upon your highness' able hand.

*Cat.* And yet to-morrow does the council meet,  
To fix a day for Edward's coronation.  
Who can expound this riddle?

*Glost.* That can I.

Those lords are each one my approv'd good friends,  
Of special trust and nearness to my bosom;  
And howsoever busy they may seem,  
And diligent to bustle in the state,  
Their zeal goes on no farther than we lead,  
And at our bidding stays.

*Cat.* Yet there is one,  
And he amongst the foremost in his power,  
Of whom I wish your highness were assur'd.  
For me, perhaps it is my nature's fault,  
I own, I doubt of his inclining, much.

*Glost.* I guess the man at whom your words would  
point:

Hastings——

*Cat.* The same.

*Glost.* He bears me great good-will.

*Cat.* 'Tis true, to you, as to the lord protector,  
And Gloster's duke, he bows with lowly service:  
But were he bid to cry, *God save King Richard*,  
Then tell me in what terms he would reply?  
Believe me, I have prov'd the man, and found him:

I know he bears a most religious reverence  
To his dead master Edward's royal memory,  
And whither that may lead him is most plain.  
Yet more—One of that stubborn sort he is,  
Who, if they once grow fond of an opinion,  
They call it honour, honesty, and faith,  
And sooner part with life than let it go.

*Glost.* And yet this tough impracticable heart,  
Is govern'd by a dainty-finger'd girl ;  
Such flaws are found in the most worthy natures ;  
A laughing, toying, wheedling, whispering she  
Shall make him amble on a gossip's message,  
And take the distaff with a hand as patient  
As e'er did Hercules.

*Rat.* The fair Alicia,  
Of noble birth and exquisite of feature,  
Has held him long a vassal to her beauty.

*Cat.* I fear, he fails in his allegiance there ;  
Or my intelligence is false, or else  
The dame has been too lavish of her feast,  
And fed him till he loathes.

*Glost.* No more, he comes.

*Enter Lord HASTINGS.*

*Hast.* Health, and the happiness of many days,  
Attend upon your grace.

*Glost.* My good lord chamberlain,  
We're much beholden to your gentle friendship.

*Hast.* My lord, I come an humble suitor to you.

*Glost.* In right good time. Speak out your pleasure freely.

*Hast.* I am to move your highness in behalf  
Of Shore's unhappy wife.

*Glost.* Say you, of Shore?

*Hast.* Once a bright star, that held her place on  
high :

The first and fairest of our English dames,  
While royal Edward held the sov'reign rule.  
Now sunk in grief, and pining with despair,  
Her waining form no longer shall incite  
Envy in woman, or desire in man.  
She never sees the sun, but thro' her tears,  
And wakes to sigh the live-long night away.

*Glost.* Marry! the times are badly chang'd with  
her,  
From Edward's days to these. Then all was jollity,  
Feasting and mirth, light wantonness and laughter,  
Piping and playing, minstrelsy and masquing;  
'Till life fled from us like an idle dream,  
A shew of mommery without a meaning.  
My brother, rest and pardon to his soul,  
Is gone to his account; for this his minion,  
The revel rout is done—But you were speaking  
Concerning her—I have been told, that you  
Are frequent in your visitation to her.

*Hast.* No farther, my good lord, than friendly pity,  
And tender-hearted charity allow.

*Glost.* Go to; I did not mean to chide you for it.

For, sooth to say, I hold it noble in you  
To cherish the distress'd — On with your tale.

*Hast.* Thus it is, gracious sir, that certain officers,  
Using the warrant of your mighty name,  
With insolence unjust, and lawless power,  
Have seiz'd upon the lands which late she held  
By grant, from her great master Edward's bounty.

*Glost.* Somewhat of this, but slightly, have I heard;  
And tho' some counsellors of forward zeal,  
Some of most ceremonious sanctity,  
And bearded wisdom, often have provok'd  
The hand of justice to fall heavy on her;  
Yet still, in kind compassion of her weakness,  
And tender memory of Edward's love,  
I have withheld the merciless stern law  
From doing outrage on her helpless beauty.

*Hast.* Good Heav'n, who renders mercy back for  
mercy,

With open-handed bounty shall repay you :  
This gentle deed shall fairly be set foremost,  
To screen the wild escapes of lawless passion,  
And the long train of frailties flesh is heir to.

*Glost.* Thus far, the voice of pity pleaded only :  
Our farther and more full extent of grace  
Is given to your request. Let her attend,  
And to ourself deliver up her griefs.  
She shall be heard with patience, and each wrong  
At full redress'd. But I have other news,  
Which much import us both ; for still my fortunes  
Go hand in hand with yours — our common foes,

The queen's relations, our new-fangled gentry,  
Have fall'n their haughty crests—That for your privacy.  
[*Exeunt.*]

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SCENE II.

*An Apartment in JANE SHORE'S House. Enter BELMOUR and DUMONT.*

*Bel.* How she has liv'd you have heard my tale already,  
The rest your own attendance in her family,  
Where I have found the means this day to place you,  
And nearer observation, best will tell you.  
See, with what sad and sober cheer she comes.

*Enter JANE SHORE.*

Sure, or I read her visage much amiss,  
Or grief besets her hard. Save you, fair lady,  
The blessings of the cheerful morn be on you,  
And greet your beauty with its opening sweets.

*J. Sh.* My gentle neighbour, your good wishes still  
Pursue my hapless fortunes! Ah, good Belmour!  
How few, like thee, inquire the wretched out,  
And court the offices of soft humanity?  
Like thee reserve their raiment for the naked,  
Reach out their bread to feed the crying orphan,  
Or mix their pitying tears with those that weep?  
Thy praise deserves a better tongue than mine,  
To speak and bless thy name. Is this the gentleman,



Whose friendly service you commended to me?

*Bel.* Madam, it is.

*J. Sh.* A venerable aspect.

[*Aside.*

Age sits with decent grace upon his visage,  
And worthily becomes his silver locks;  
He wears the marks of many years well spent,  
Of virtue, truth well try'd, and wise experience;  
A friend like this would suit my sorrows well.  
Fortune, I fear me, sir, has meant you ill, [*To Dum.*  
Who pays your merit with that scanty pittance  
Which my poor hand and humble roof can give.  
But to supply these golden vantages,  
Which elsewhere you might find, expect to meet  
A just regard and value for your worth,  
The welcome of a friend, and the free partnership  
Of all that little good the world allows me.

*Dum.* You over-rate me much; and all my answer  
Must be my future truth; let them speak for me,  
And make up my deserving.

*J. Sh.* Are you of England?

*Dum.* No, gracious lady, Flanders claims my birth;  
At Antwerp has my constant bidding been,  
Where sometimes I have known more plentiful days  
Than these which now my failing age affords.

*J. Sh.* Alas! at Antwerp, I—Oh, forgive my tears!

[*Weeping.*

They fall for my offences—and must fall  
Long, long ere they shall wash my stains away.  
You knew perhaps—Oh grief! oh shame!—my hus-  
band,

*Dum.* I knew him well—but stay this flood of anguish,

The senseless grave feels not your pious sorrows :  
Three years and more are past, since I was bid,  
With many of our common friends, to wait him  
To his last peaceful mansion. I attended,  
Sprinkled his clay-cold corse with holy drops,  
According to our church's rev'rend rite,  
And saw him laid in hallow'd ground, to rest.

*J. Sh.* Oh, that my soul had known no joy but him !  
That I had liv'd within his guiltless arms,  
And dying slept in innocence beside him !  
But now his dust abhors the fellowship,  
And scorns to mix with mine.

*Enter a Servant.*

*Ser.* The lady Alicia  
Attends your leisure.

*J. Sh.* Say I wish to see her. *[Exit Servant.]*  
Please, gentle sir, one moment to retire,  
I'll wait you on the instant, and inform you  
Of each unhappy circumstance, in which  
Your friendly aid and counsel much may stead me.

*[Exeunt Belmour and Dumont.]*

*Enter ALICIA.*

*Alic.* Still, my fair friend, still shall I find you  
thus ?  
Still shall these sighs heave after one another,  
These trickling drops chase one another still,

As if the posting messengers of grief  
Could overtake the hours fled far away,  
And make old Time come back?

*J. Sh.* No, my Alicia,  
Heaven and his saints be witness to my thoughts,  
There is no hour of all my life o'er past,  
That I could wish to take its turn again.

*Alic.* And yet some of those days my friend has  
known,

Some of those years might pass for golden ones,  
At least if womankind can judge of happiness.  
What could we wish, we who delight in empire,  
Whose beauty is our sov'reign good, and gives us  
Our reasons to rebel, and pow'r to reign,  
What could we more than to behold a monarch,  
Lovely, renown'd, a conqueror, and young,  
Bound in our chains, and sighing at our feet?

*J. Sh.* 'Tis true, the royal Edward was a wonder,  
The goodly pride of all our English youth;  
He was the very joy of all that saw him.  
Form'd to delight, to love and to persuade.

"Impassive spirits and angelic natures

"Might have been charm'd, like yielding human  
weakness,

"Stoop'd from their Heav'n, and listen'd to his talk-  
ing.

But what had I to do with kings and courts?  
My humble lot had cast me far beneath him;  
And that he was the first of all mankind,  
The bravest, and most lovely, was my curse.

*Alic.* Sure, something more than fortune join'd  
your loves:

Nor could his greatness, and his gracious form,  
Be elsewhere match'd so well, as to the sweetness  
And beauty of my friend.

*J. Sh.* Name him no more :

He was the bane and ruin of my peace.  
This anguish and these tears, these are the legacies  
His fatal love has left me. Thou wilt see me,  
Believe me, my Alicia, thou wilt see me,  
E'er yet a few short days pass o'er my head,  
Abandon'd to the very utmost wretchedness.  
The hand of pow'r has seiz'd almost the whole  
Of what was left for needy life's support ;  
Shortly thou wilt behold me poor, and kneeling  
Before thy charitable door for bread.

*Alic.* Joy of my life, my dearest Shore, forbear  
To wound my heart with thy foreboding sorrows ;  
Raise thy sad soul to better hopes than these,  
Lift up thy eyes, and let them shine once more,  
Bright as the morning sun above the mist.  
Exert thy charms, seek out the stern Protector,  
And soothe his savage temper with thy beauty :  
Spite of his deadly, unrelenting nature,  
He shall be mov'd to pity, and redress thee.

*J. Sh.* My form, alas ! has long forgot to please ;  
The scene of beauty and delight is chang'd ;  
No roses bloom upon my fading cheek,  
Nor laughing graces wanton in my eyes ;  
But haggard grief, lean-looking sallow care,

And pining discontent, a rueful train,  
 Dwell on my brow, all hideous and forlorn.  
 One only shadow of a hope is left me ;  
 The noble-minded Hastings, of his goodness,  
 Has kindly underta'en to be my advocate,  
 And move my humble suit to angry Gloster.

*Alic.* Does Hastings undertake to plead your cause ?  
 But wherefore should he not ? Hastings has eyes ;  
 The gentle lord has a right tender heart,  
 Melting and easy; yielding to impression,  
 And catching the soft flame from each new beauty ;  
 But yours shall charm him long.

*J. Sh.* Away, you flatterer !  
 Nor charge his gen'rous meaning with a weakness,  
 Which his great soul and virtue must disdain.  
 Too much of love thy hapless friend has prov'd,  
 Too many giddy foolish hours are gone,  
 And in fantastic measures danc'd away :  
 May the remaining few know only friendship.  
 So thou, my dearest, truest, best Alicia,  
 Vouchsafe to lodge me in thy gentle heart,  
 A partner there ; I will give up mankind,  
 Forget the transports of increasing passion,  
 And all the pangs we feel for its decay.

*Alic.* Live ! live and reign for ever in my bosom ;  
[Embracing.]

Safe and unrivall'd there possess thy own ;  
 And you, the brightest of the stars above,  
 Ye saints that once were women here below,  
 Be witness of the truth, the holy friendship,

Which here to this my other self I vow.  
If I not hold her nearer to my soul,  
Than every other joy the world can give ;  
Let poverty, deformity, and shame,  
Distraction and despair seize me on earth,  
Let not my faithless ghost have peace hereafter,  
Nor taste the bliss of your celestial fellowship.

*J. Sh.* Yes, thou art true, and only thou art true ;  
Therefore these jewels, once the lavish bounty  
Of royal Edward's love, I trust to thee ;

*[Giving a casket.]*

Receive this, all that I can call my own,  
And let it rest unknown, and safe with thee :  
That if the state's injustice should oppress me,  
Strip me of all, and turn me out a wanderer,  
My wretchedness may find relief from thee,  
And shelter from the storm.

*Alic.* My all is thine ;  
One common hazard shall attend us both,  
And both be fortunate, or both be wretched.  
But let thy fearful doubting heart be still ;  
The saints and angels have thee in their charge,  
And all things shall be well. Think not, the good,  
The gentle deeds of mercy thou hast done,  
Shall die forgotten all ; "the poor, the pris'ner,  
" The fatherless, the friendless, and the widow,  
" Who daily own the bounty of thy hand,  
" Shall cry to Heav'n and pull a blessing on thee ;"  
Ev'n man, the merciless insulter man,  
Man, who rejoices in our sex's weakness,

Shall pity thee, and with unwonted goodness  
Forget thy failings, and record thy praise.

*J. Sh.* Why should I think that man will do for me,  
What yet he never did for wretches like me?  
Mark by what partial justice we are judg'd :  
Such is the fate unhappy women find,  
And such the curse entail'd upon our kind,  
That man, the lawless libertine, may rove,  
Free and unquestion'd through the wilds of love ;  
While woman, sense and nature's easy fool,  
If poor weak woman swerve from virtue's rule,  
If, strongly charm'd, she leave the thorny way,  
And in the softer paths of pleasure stray,  
Ruin ensues, reproach and endless shame,  
And one false step entirely damns her fame :  
In vain with tears the loss she may deplore,  
In vain look back on what she was before ;  
She sets, like stars that fall, to rise no more. [*Exeunt*]

ACT II. SCENE I.

*Continues.* Enter ALICIA, speaking to JANE SHORE as  
entering.

*Alicia.*

No farther, gentle friend ; good angels guard you,  
And spread their gracious wings about your slumbers.  
The drowsy night grows on the world, and now  
The busy craftsmen and o'er-labour'd hind

Forget the travail of the day in sleep :  
Care only wakes, and moping pensiveness ;  
With meagre discontented looks they sit,  
And watch the wasting of the midnight taper.  
Such vigils must I keep, so wakes my soul,  
Restless and self-tormented ! Oh, false Hastings !  
Thou hast destroy'd my peace. [*Knocking without.*  
What noise is that ?  
What visitor is this, who with bold freedom,  
Breaks in upon the peaceful night and rest,  
With such a rude approach ?

*Enter a Servant.*

Ser. One from the court,  
Lord Hastings (as I think) demands my lady.

Alic. Hastings ! Be still, my heart, and try to meet  
him  
With his own arts : with falshood—But he comes.

*Enter Lord HASTINGS, speaks to a Servant as entering.*

Hast. Dismiss my train, and wait alone without.  
Alicia here ! Unfortunate encounter !  
But be it as it may.

Alic. When humbly, thus,  
The great descend to visit the afflicted,  
When thus, unmindful of their rest, they come  
To sooth the sorrows of the midnight mourner,  
Comfort comes with them ; like the golden sun,  
Dispels the sullen shades with her sweet influence,  
And cheers the melancholy house of care.



*Hast.* 'Tis true, I would not over-rate a courtesy,  
Nor let the coldness of delay hang on it,  
To nip and blast its favour, like a frost;  
But rather chose, at this late hour, to come,  
That your fair friend may know I have prevail'd;  
The lord protector has receiv'd her suit,  
And means to shew her grace.

*Alic.* My friend! my lord.

*Hast.* Yes, lady, yours: none has a right more  
ample

To task my pow'r than you.

*Alic.* I want the words,  
To pay you back a compliment so courtly;  
But my heart guesses at the friendly meaning,  
And wo' not die your debtor.

*Hast.* 'Tis well, madam.  
But I would see your friend.

*Alic.* Oh, thou false lord!  
I would be mistress of my heaving heart,  
Stifle this rising rage, and learn from thee  
To dress my face in easy dull indifference:  
But 'two' not be; my wrongs will tear their way,  
And rush at once upon thee.

*Hast.* Are you wise?  
Have you the use of reason? Do you wake?  
What means this raving, this transporting passion?

*Alic.* Oh, thou cool traitor! thou insulting tyrant.  
Dost thou behold my poor distracted heart,  
Thus rent with agonizing love and rage,  
And ask me what it means? Art thou not false?

Am I not scorn'd, forsaken, and abandon'd,  
Left, like a common wretch, to shame and infamy,  
Giv'n up to be the sport of villains' tongues,  
Of laughing parasites, and lewd buffoons;  
And all because my soul has doated on thee  
With love, with truth, and tenderness unutterable?

*Hast.* Are these the proofs of tenderness and love?  
These endless quarrels, discontents, and jealousies,  
These never-ceasing wailings and complainings,  
These furious starts, these whirlwinds of the soul,  
Which every other moment rise to madness?

*Alic.* What proof, alas! have I not giv'n of love?  
What have I not abandon'd to thy arms?  
Have I not set at nought my noble birth,  
A spotless fame, and an unblemish'd race,  
The peace of innocence, and pride of virtue?  
My prodigality has giv'n thee all;  
And now, I've nothing left me to bestow,  
You hate the wretched bankrupt you have made.

*Hast.* Why am I thus pursu'd from place to place,  
Kept in the view, and cross'd at every turn?  
In vain I fly, and, like a hunted deer,  
Scud o'er the lawns, and hasten to the covert;  
E'er I can reach my safety, you o'ertake me  
With the swift malice of some keen reproach,  
And drive the winged shaft deep in my heart.

*Alic.* Hither you fly, and here you seek repose;  
Spite of the poor deceit, your arts are known,  
Your pious, charitable midnight visits.

*Hast.* If you are wise, and prize your peace of mind,

Yet take the friendly counsel of my love;  
Believe me true, nor listen to your jealousy.  
Let not that devil, which undoes your sex,  
That cursed curiosity seduce you,  
To hunt for needless secrets, which, neglected,  
Shall never hurt your quiet; but once known,  
Shall sit upon your heart, pinch it with pain,  
And banish the sweet sleep for ever from you.  
Go to—be yet advis'd—

*Alic.* Dost thou in scorn,  
Preach patience to my rage, and bid me tamely  
Sit like a poor contented idiot down,  
Nor dare to think thou'st wrong'd me? ~~Ruin scine~~  
thee,

And swift perdition overtake thy treachery.  
Have I the least remaining cause to doubt?  
Hast thou endeavour'd once to hide thy falsehood?  
To hide it might have spoke some little tenderness,  
And shewn thee half unwilling to undo me:  
But thou disdain'st the weakness of humanity,  
'Thy words, and all thy actions, have confess'd it;  
Ev'n now thy eyes avow it, now they speak,  
And insolently own the glorious villany.

*Hast.* Well, then, I own my heart has broke your  
chains.

Patient I bore the painful bondage long,  
At length my gen'rous love disdains your tyranny;  
The bitterness and stings of taunting jealousy,  
Vexatious days, and jarring, joyless nights,

Have driv'n him forth to seek some safer shelter,  
Where he may rest his weary wings in peace.

*Alic.* You triumph! do! and with gigantic pride  
Defy impending vengeance. Heav'n shall wink;  
No more his arm shall roll the dreadful thunder,  
Nor send his lightnings forth: no more his justice  
Shall visit the presuming sons of men,  
But perjury, like thine, shall dwell in safety.

*Hast.* Whate'er my fate decrees for me hereafter,  
Be present to me now, my better angel!  
Preserve me from the storm that threatens now,  
And if I have beyond attonement sinn'd,  
Let any other kind of plague o'ertake me,  
So I escape the fury of that tongue.

*Alic.* Thy pray'r is heard—I go—but know, proud  
lord,  
Howe'er thou scorn'st the weakness of my sex,  
This feeble hand may find the means to reach thee,  
Howe'er sublime in pow'r and greatness plac'd,  
With royal favour guarded round and grac'd;  
On eagle's wings my rage shall urge her flight,  
And hurl thee headlong from thy topmost height;  
Then, like thy fate, superior will I sit,  
And view thee fall'n, and grov'ling at my feet;  
See thy last breath with indignation go,  
And tread thee sinking to the shades below. [*Exit.*]

*Hast.* How fierce a fiend is passion! With what  
wildness,  
What tyranny untam'd it reigns in woman!  
Unhappy sex! whose easy yielding temper

Gives way to ev'ry appetite alike :

" Each gust of inclination, uncontrol'd,

" Sweeps thro' their souls and sets them in an uproar ;

" Each motion of the heart rises to fury,"

And love in their weak bosoms is a rage

As terrible as hate, and as destructive.

" So the wind roars o'er the wide fenceless ocean,

" And heaves the billows of the boiling deep,

" Alike from north, from south, from east, from  
west ;

" With equal force the tempest blows by turns

" From every corner of the seaman's compass."

But soft ye now—for here comes one, disclaims

Strife and her wrangling train ; of equal elements,

Without one jarring atom was she form'd,

And gentleness and joy make up her being.

*Enter JANE SHORE.*

Forgive me, fair one, if officious friendship

Intrudes on your repose, and comes thus late

To greet you with the tidings of success.

The princely Gloster has vouchsaf'd your hearing,

To-morrow he expects you at the court ;

There plead your cause, with never-failing beauty,

Speak all your griefs, and find a full redress.

*J. Sh.* Thus humbly let your lowly servant bend.

*[Kneeling.]*

Thus let me bow my grateful knee to earth,

And bless your noble nature for this goodness.

D ij

*Hast.* Rise, gentle dame, you wrong my meaning  
much,  
Think me not guilty of a thought so vain,  
To sell my courtesy for thanks like these.

*J. Sh.* 'Tis true, your bounty is beyond my speaking:

But tho' my mouth be dumb, my heart shall thank  
you;

And when it melts before the throne of mercy,  
Mourning and bleeding for my past offences,  
My fervent soul shall breathe one pray'r for you,  
If pray'rs of such a wretch are heard on high,  
That Heav'n will pay you back, when most you need,  
The grace and goodness you have shewn to me.

*Hast.* If there be ought of merit in my service,  
Impute it there, where most 'tis due, to love;  
Be kind, my gentle mistress, to my wishes,  
And satisfy my panting heart with beauty.

*J. Sh.* Alas! my lord——

*Hast.* Why bend thy eyes to earth?  
Wherefore these looks of heaviness and sorrow?  
Why breathes that sigh, my love? And wherefore  
falls

This trickling show'r of tears, to stain thy sweetness?

*J. Sh.* If pity dwells within your noble breast,  
(As sure it does) Oh, speak not to me thus.

*Hast.* Can I behold thee, and not speak of love?  
Ev'n now, thus sadly as thou stand'st before me,  
Thus desolate, dejected, and forlorn,  
Thy softness steals upon my yielding senses,

Till my soul faints, and sickens with desire ;  
 How canst thou give this motion to my heart,  
 And bid my tongue be still ?

*J. Sh.* Cast round your eyes  
 Upon the high-born beauties of the court ;  
 Behold, like opening roses, where they bloom,  
 Sweet to the sense, unsully'd all, and spotless ;  
 There choose some worthy partner of your heart,  
 To fill your arms, and bless your virtuous bed ;  
 Nor turn your eyes this way, " where sin and misery,  
 " Like loathsome weeds, have over-run the soil,  
 " And the destroyer, Shame, has laid all waste."

*Hast.* What means this peevish, this fantastic  
 change ?

Where is thy wonted pleasantness of face,  
 Thy wonted graces, and thy dimpled smiles ?  
 Where hast thou lost thy wit, and sportive mirth ?  
 That chearful heart, which us'd to dance for ever,  
 And cast a day of gladness all around thee ?

*J. Sh.* Yes, I will own I merit the reproach ;  
 And for those foolish days of wanton pride,  
 My soul is justly humbled to the dust :  
 All tongues, like yours, are licens'd to upbraid me,  
 Still to repeat my guilt, to urge my infamy,  
 And treat me like that abject thing I have been.  
 " Yet let the saints be witness to this truth,  
 " That now, tho' late, I look with horror back,  
 " That I detest my wretched self, and curse  
 " My past polluted life. All-judging Heav'n,

"Who knows my crimes, has seen my sorrow for them."

*Hast.* No more of this dull stuff. 'Tis time enough  
To whine and mortify thyself with penance,  
"When the decaying sense is pall'd with pleasure,  
"And weary nature tires in her last stage;  
"Then weep and tell thy beads, when alt'ring rheums  
"Have stain'd the lustre of thy starry eyes,  
"And failing palsies shake thy wither'd hand."  
The present moment claims more gen'rous use;  
Thy beauty, night and solitude, reproach me,  
For having talk'd thus long—come let me press thee,  
[*Laying hold of her.*

Pant on thy bosom, sink into thy arms,  
And lose myself in the luxurious flood.

"*J. Sh.* Never! by those chaste lights above, I  
swear,  
"My soul shall never know pollution more;"  
Forbear, my lord!—here let me rather die:  
[*Kneeling.*

"Let quick destruction overtake me here,"  
And end my sorrows and my shame for ever.

*Hast.* Away with this perverseness,—'tis too much.  
Nay, if you strive—'tis monstrous affectation!

[*Striving.*

*J. Sh.* Retire! I beg you leave me—

*Hast.* Thus to coy it!—

With one who knows you too.—

*J. Sh.* For mercy's sake—



*Hast.* Ungrateful woman! Is it thus you pay  
My services?——

*J. Sh.* Abandon me to ruin——  
Rather than urge me——

*Hast.* This way to your chamber;     [*Pulling her.*  
There if you struggle——

*J. Sh.* Help, oh, gracious Heaven!  
Help! Save me! Help!                     [*Exit.*

*Enter DUMONT, he interposes.*

*Dum.* My lord! for honour's sake——

*Hast.* Hah! What art thou?—Begone!

*Dum.* My duty calls me  
To my attendance on my mistress here. /

“*J. Sh.* For pity, let me go”——

*Hast.* Avaunt! base groom——  
At distance wait, and know thy office better.

*Dum.* “Forgo your hold, my lord!” ’tis most un-  
manly

This violence——

*Hast.* Avoid the room this moment,  
“Or I will tread thy soul out.”

*Dum.* No, my lord——  
The common ties of manhood call me now,  
And bid me thus stand up in the defence  
Of an oppress’d, unhappy, helpless woman.

*Hast.* And dost thou know me, slave?

*Dum.* Yes, thou proud lord!  
I know thee well; know thee with each advantage  
Which wealth, or power, or noble birth can give thee.

I know thee, too, for one who stains those honours,  
And blots a long illustrious line of ancestry,  
By poorly daring thus to wrong a woman.

*Hast.* 'Tis wond'rous well! I see, my saint-like dame,  
You stand provided of your braves and ruffians,  
To man your cause, and bluster in your brothel.

*Dum.* Take back the foul reproach, unmanner'd  
railer!

Nor urge my rage too far, lest thou should'st find  
I have as daring spirits in my blood  
As thou or any of thy race e'er boasted;  
And tho' no gaudy titles grac'd my birth,  
"Titles, the servile courtier's lean reward,  
"Sometimes the pay of virtue, but more oft  
"The hire which greatness gives to slaves and sycophants,"

Yet Heav'n that made me honest, made me more  
Than ever king did, when he made a lord.

*Hast.* Insolent villain! henceforth let this teach  
thee

[*Draws and strikes him.*]

The distance 'twixt a peasant and a prince.

*Dum.* Nay, then, my lord, [*drawing*] learn you by  
this, how well

An arm resolv'd can guard its master's life.

[*They fight.*]

"*J. Sh.* Oh my distracting fears! hold, for sweet  
Heav'n."

[*They fight, Dumont disarms Lord Hastings.*]

*Hast.* Confusion! baffled by a base-born hind!

*Dum.* Now, haughty sir, where is our difference now?

Your life is in my hand, and did not honour,  
The gentleness of blood, and inborn virtue  
(Howe'er unworthy I may seem to you)  
Plead in my bosom, I should take the forfeit.  
But wear your sword again; and know, a lord  
Oppos'd against a man, is but a man.

*Hast.* Curse on my failing arm! Your better fortune

Has given you vantage o'er me; but perhaps  
Your triumph may be bought with dear repentance.

[Exit Hastings.]

*Enter JANE SHORE.*

*J. Sh.* Alas! what have ye done? Know ye the  
pow'r,  
The mightiness, that waits upon this lord?

*Dum.* Fear not, my worthiest mistress; 'tis a cause  
In which Heaven's guards shall wait you. O pursue,  
Pursue the sacred counsels of your soul,  
Which urge you on to virtue; let not danger,  
Nor the incumb'ring world, make faint your purpose.  
Assisting angels shall conduct your steps,  
Bring you to bliss, and crown your days with peace.

*J. Sh.* Oh, that my head were laid, my sad eyes  
clos'd,  
And my cold corse wound in my shroud to rest!  
My painful heart will never cease to beat,  
Will never know a moment's peace till then.

*Dum.* Would you be happy, leave this fatal place;  
Fly from the court's pernicious neighbourhood;

Where innocence is sham'd, and blushing modesty  
Is made the scorner's jest ; where hate, deceit,  
And deadly ruin, wear the masques of beauty,  
And draw deluded fools with shews of pleasure.

*J. Sh.* Where should I fly, thus helpless and forlorn,

Of friends, and all the means of life bereft ?

*Dum.* Belmour, whose friendly care still wakes to  
serve you,

Has found you out a little peaceful refuge,  
Far from the court and the tumultuous city.  
Within an ancient forest's ample verge,  
There stands a lonely but a healthful dwelling,  
Built for convenience and the use of life :  
Around it fallows, meads, and pastures fair,  
A little garden, and a limpid brook,  
By nature's own contrivance seem'd dispos'd ;  
No neighbours, but a few poor simple clowns,  
Honest and true, with a well meaning priest :  
No faction, or domestic fury's rage,  
Did e'er disturb the quiet of that place,  
When the contending nobles shook the land  
With York and Lancaster's disputed sway.  
Your virtue there may find a safe retreat  
From the insulting pow'rs of wicked greatness.

*J. Sh.* Can there be so much happiness in store !  
A cell like that is all my hopes aspire to.  
Haste, then, and thither let us take our flight,  
E'er the clouds gather, and the wint'ry sky  
Descends in storms to intercept our passage.

*Dum.* Will you then go ! You glad my very soul.  
 Banish your fears, cast all your cares on me ;  
 Plenty and ease, and peace of mind shall wait you,  
 And make your latter days of life most happy.  
 Oh, lady ! but I must not, cannot tell you,  
 How anxious I have been for all your dangers,  
 And how my heart rejoices at your safety.  
 So when the spring renews the flow'ry field,  
 And warns the pregnant nightingale to build,  
 She seeks the safest shelter of the wood,  
 Where she may trust her little tuneful brood ;  
 Where no rude swains her shady cell may know,  
 No serpents climb, nor blasting winds may blow ;  
 Fond of the chosen place, she views it o'er,  
 Sits there, and wanders thro' the grove no more ;  
 Warbling she charms it each returning night,  
 And loves it with a mother's dear delight. [*Exeunt*]

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ACT III. SCENE I.

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*The Court. Enter ALICIA, with a paper.*

*Alicia.*

THIS paper to the great protector's hand,  
 With care and secrecy, must be convey'd ;  
 His bold ambition now avows its aim,  
 To pluck the crown from Edward's infant brow,

And fix it on his own. I know he holds  
My faithless Hastings adverse to his hopes,  
And much devoted to the orphan king;  
On that I build : this paper meets his doubts,  
And marks my hated rival as the cause  
Of Hastings's zeal for his dead master's sons.  
Oh, jealousy ! thou bane of pleasing friendship,  
" Thou worst invader of our tender bosoms,"  
How does thy rancour poison all our softness,  
And turn our gentle natures into bitterness ?  
See where she comes ! once my heart's dearest blessing,  
Now my chang'd eyes are blasted with her beauty,  
Loath that known face, and sicken to behold her.

*Enter JANE SHORE.*

*J. Sh.* Now whither shall I fly to find relief ?  
" What charitable hand will aid me now ?  
" Will stay my falling steps, support my ruins,  
" And heal my wounded mind with balmy comfort ?"  
Oh, my Alicia !

*Alic.* What new grief is this ?  
What unforeseen misfortune has surpriz'd thee,  
That racks thy tender heart thus ?

*J. Sh.* Oh, Dumont !

*Alic.* Say what of him ?

*J. Sh.* That friendly, honest man,  
Whom Belmour brought of late to my assistance,  
On whose kind care, whose diligence and faith,

My surest trust was built, this very morn  
Was seiz'd on by the cruel hand of power,  
Forc'd from my house, and born away to prison.

*Alic.* To prison, said you! Can you guess the cause?

*J. Sh.* Too well, I fear. His bold defence of me  
Has drawn the vengeance of Lord Hastings on him.

*Alic.* Lord Hastings! Ha!

*J. Sh.* Some fitter time must tell thee  
The tale of my hard hap. Upon the present  
Hang all my poor, my last remaining hopes.  
Within this paper is my suit contain'd;  
Here as the princely Gloster passes forth,  
I wait to give it on my humble knees,  
And move him for redress.

*[She gives the paper to Alicia, who opens and seems to read it.]*

*Alic.* *[Aside.]* Now for a wile,  
To sting my thoughtless rival to the heart;  
To blast her fatal beauties, and divide her  
For ever from my perjur'd Hastings' eyes:  
"The wanderer may then look back to me,  
"And turn to his forsaken home again;"  
Their fashions are the same, it cannot fail.

*[Pulling out the other paper.]*

*J. Sh.* But see the great protector comes this way,  
"Attended by a train of waiting courtiers."  
Give me the paper, friend.

*Alic.* *[Aside.]* For love and vengeance!

*[She gives her the other paper.]*

*Enter the Duke of GLOSTER, Sir RICHARD RATCLIFFE, CATESBY, Courtiers, and other Attendants.*

*J. Sh. [Kneeling.]* Oh, noble Gloster, turn thy gracious eye,

Incline thy pitying ear to my complaint,  
A poor, undone, forsaken, helpless woman,  
Intreats a little bread for charity,  
To feed her wants, and save her life from perishing.

*Glost.* Arise, fair dame, and dry your wat'ry eyes.

*[Receiving the paper, and raising her.]*

Beshrew me, but 'twere pity of his heart  
That could refuse a boon to such a suitress.  
Y'have got a noble friend to be your advocate;  
A worthy and right gentle lord he is,  
And to his trust most true. This present Now  
Some matters of the state detain our leisure;  
Those once dispatch'd, we'll call for you anon,  
And give your griefs redress. Go to! be comforted.

*J. Sh.* Good Heav'ns repay your highness for this pity,

And show'r down blessings on your princely head.  
Come, my Alicia, reach thy friendly arm,  
And help me to support this feeble frame,  
That nodding totters with oppressive woe,  
And sinks beneath its load. *[Exeunt J. Sh. and Alic.]*

*Glost.* Now by my holidame!

Heavy of heart she seems, and sore afflicted.  
But thus it is when rude calamity  
Lays its strong gripe upon these mincing minions;



The dainty gew-gaw forms dissolve at once,  
And shiver at the shock. What says her paper?

[*Seeming to read.*

Ha! what is this? Come nearer, Ratcliffe! Catesby!  
Mark the contents, and then divine the meaning.

[*He reads.*

*Wonder not, princely Gloster, at the notice  
This paper brings you from a friend unknown;  
Lord Hastings is inclin'd to call you master,  
And kneel to Richard, as to England's king;  
But Shore's bewitching wife misleads his heart,  
And draws his service, to King Edward's sons:  
Drive her away, you break the charm that holds him,  
And he, and all his powers, attend you.*

*Rat.* 'Tis wonderful!

*Cat.* The means by which it came  
Yet stranger too!

*Glost.* You saw it given, but now.

*Rat.* She could not know the purport.

*Glost.* No, 'tis plain——

She knows it not, it levels at her life;  
Should she presume to prate of such high matters,  
The meddling harlot, dear she should abide it.

*Cat.* What hand soe'er it comes from, be assur'd,  
It means your highness well——

*Glost.* Upon the instant,  
Lord Hastings will be hear; this morn I mean  
To prove him to the quick; then if he flinch,  
No more but this—away with him at once,

He must be mine or nothing——But he comes !  
Draw nearer this way, and observe me well.

[*They whisper.*]

*Enter Lord HASTINGS.*

*Hast.* This foolish woman hangs about my heart,  
Lingers and wanders in my fancy still ;  
This coyness is put on, 'tis art and cunning,  
And worn to urge desire——I must possess her.  
The groom, who lift his saucy hand against me,  
E'er this, is humbled, and repents his daring.  
Perhaps, ev'n she may profit by th' example,  
And teach her beauty not to scorn my pow'r.

*Glost.* This do, and wait me e'er the council sits.

[*Exeunt Rat. and Cat.*]

My lord, y'are well encountred ; here has been  
A fair petitioner this morning with us ;  
Believe me, she has won me much to pity her :  
Alas ! her gentle nature was not made  
To buffet with adversity. I told her  
How worthily her cause you had befriended ;  
How much for your good sake we meant to do,  
That you had spoke, and all things should be well.

*Hast.* Your highness binds me ever to your service.

*Glost.* You know your friendship is most potent  
with us,

And shares our power. But of this enough,  
For we have other matters for your ear ;  
The state is out of tune : distracting fears,  
And jealous doubts, jar in our public counsels ;

Amidst the wealthy city, murmurs rise,  
 Lewd railings, and reproach on those that rule,  
 With open scorn of government ; hence credit,  
 And public trust 'twixt man and man, are broke.  
 The golden streams of commerce are with-held,  
 Which fed the wants of needy hinds and artizans,  
 Who therefore curse the great, and threat rebellion.

*Hast.* The resty knaves are over-run with ease,  
 As plenty ever is the nurse of faction ;  
 If in good days, like these, the headstrong herd  
 Grow madly wanton and repine ; it is  
 Because the reins of power are held too slack,  
 And reverend authority of late  
 Has worn a face of mercy more than justice.

*Glost.* Beshrew my heart ! but you have well di-  
 vin'd

The source of these disorders. Who can wonder  
 If riot and misrule o'erturn the realm,  
 When the crown sits upon a baby brow ?  
 Plainly to speak ; hence comes the gen'ral cry,  
 And sum of all complaint : 'twill ne'er be well  
 With England (thus they talk) while children go-  
 vern.

*Hast.* 'Tis true, the king is young ; but what of  
 that ?

We feel no want of Edward's riper years,  
 While Gloster's valour and most princely wisdom  
 So well supply our infant sov'reign's place,  
 His youth's support, and guardian to his throne.

*Glost.* The council (much I'm bound to thank 'em for't)

Have plac'd a pageant sceptre in my hand,  
Barren of power, and subject to control ;  
Scorn'd by my foes, and useless to my friends.  
Oh, worthy lord! were mine the rule indeed,  
I think I should not suffer rank offence  
At large to lord it in the common-weal ;  
Nor would the realm be rent by discord thus,  
Thus fear and doubt, betwixt disputed titles.

*Hast.* Of this I am to learn ; as not supposing  
A doubt like this——

*Glost.* Ay, marry, but there is——  
And that of much concern. Have you not heard  
How, on a late occasion, Doctor Shaw  
Has mov'd the people much about the lawfulness  
Of Edward's issue ? By right grave authority  
Of learning and religion, plainly proving,  
A bastard scion never should be grafted  
Upon a royal stock ; from thence, at full  
Discoursing on my brother's former contract  
To Lady Elizabeth Lucy, long before  
His jolly match with that same buxom widow  
The queen he left behind him——

*Hast.* Ill befall  
Such meddling priests, who kindle up confusion,  
And vex the quiet world with their vain scruples !  
By Heav'n 'tis done in perfect spite to peace.  
Did not the king,  
Our royal master, Edward, in concurrence

With his estates assembled, well determine  
 What course the sov'reign rule should take hence-  
 forward ?

When shall the deadly hate of faction cease,  
 When shall our long-divided land have rest,  
 If every peevish, moody malecontent  
 Shall set the senseless rabble in an uproar,  
 Fright them with dangers, and perplex their brain,  
 Each day with some fantastic giddy change ?

*Glost.* What if some patriot, for the public good,  
 Should vary from your scheme, new-mould the state ?

*Hast.* Curse on the innovating hand attempts it !  
 Remember him, the villain, righteous Heaven,  
 In thy great day of vengeance ! Blast the traitor  
 And his pernicious counsels ; who for wealth,  
 For pow'r, the pride of greatness, or revenge,  
 Would plunge his native land in civil wars !

*Glost.* You go too far, my lord.

*Hast.* Your highness' pardon——

Have we so soon forgot those days of ruin,  
 When York and Lancaster drew forth the battles ;  
 When, like a matron butcher'd by her sons,  
 “ And cast beside some common way, a spectacle  
 “ Of horror and affright to passers by,”  
 Our groaning country bled at ev'ry vein ;  
 When murders, rapes, and massacres prevail'd ;  
 When churches, palaces, and cities blaz'd ;  
 When insolence and barbarism triumph'd,  
 And swept away distinction ; peasants trod  
 Upon the necks of nobles : low were laid

The reverend crosier, and the holy mitre,  
And desolation cover'd all the land ;  
Who can remember this, and not, like me,  
Here vow to sheath a dagger in his heart  
Whose damn'd ambition would renew those horrors,  
And set once more that scene of blood before us ?

*Glost.* How now ! so hot !

*Hast.* So brave, and so resolv'd.

*Glost.* Is then our friendship of so little moment,  
That you could arm your hand against my life ?

*Hast.* I hope your highness does not think I mean it ;  
No, Heav'n forefend that e'er your princely person  
Should come within the scope of my resentment.

*Glost.* Oh, noble Hastings ! Nay, I must embrace  
you ;

[*Embraces him.*]

By holy Paul, y'are a right honest man !  
The time is full of danger and distrust,  
And warns us to be wary. Hold me not  
Too apt for jealousy and light surmise,  
If when I meant to lodge you next my heart,  
I put your truth to trial. Keep your loyalty,  
And live, your king and country's best support :  
For me, I ask no more than honour gives,  
To think me yours, and rank me with your friends

“ *Hast.* Accept what thanks a grateful heart should  
pay,

“ Oh, princely Gloster ! judge me not ungentle,

“ Of manners rude, and insolent of speech,

“ If, when the public safety is in question,

“ My zeal flows warm and eager from my tongue.

"*Glost.* Enough of this: to deal in wordy compliment

"Is much against the plainness of my nature:

"I judge you by myself, a clear true spirit,

"And, as such, once more join you to my bosom.

"Farewell, and be my friend." [*Exit* *Glost.*

*Hast.* I am not read,

Nor skill'd and practis'd in the arts of greatness,

To kindle thus, and give a scope to passion.

The Duke is surely noble; but he touch'd me

Ev'n on the tend'rest point; the master-string

That makes most harmony or discord to me.

I own the glorious subject fires my breast,

And my soul's darling passion stands confess'd;

Beyond or love's or friendship's sacred band,

Beyond myself, I prize my native land:

On this foundation would I build my fame,

And emulate the Greek and Roman name;

Think England's peace bought cheaply with my blood,

And die with pleasure for my country's good. [*Exit.*

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ACT IV. SCENE I.

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*Continues.* Enter Duke of GLOSTER, RATCLIFFE  
and CATESBY.

*Gloster.*

THIS was the sum of all: that he would brook  
No alteration in the present state.

Marry, at last, the testy gentleman  
Was almost mov'd to bid us bold defiance;  
But there I dropt the argument, and changing  
The first design and purport of my speech,  
I prais'd his good affection to young Edward,  
And left him to believe my thoughts like his.  
Proceed we then in this foremention'd matter,  
As nothing bound or trusting to his friendship.

*Rat.* Ill does it thus befall. I could have wish'd  
This lord had stood with us. "His friends are  
wealthy;

"Thereto, his own possessions large and mighty;  
"The vassals and dependants on his power  
"Firm in adherence, ready, bold, and many;"  
His name had been of vantage to your highness,  
And stood our present purpose much in stead.

*Glost.* This wayward and perverse declining from us,  
Has warrant'd at full the friendly notice,  
Which we this morn receiv'd. I hold it certain,  
This puling, whining harlot rules his reason,  
And prompts his zeal for Edward's bastard brood.

*Cat.* If she have such dominion o'er his heart,  
And turn it at her will, you rule her fate;  
And should, by inference and apt deduction,  
Be arbiter of his. Is not her bread,  
The very means immediate to her being,  
The bounty of your hand? Why does she live,  
If not to yield obedience to your pleasure,  
To speak, to act, to think as you command?

*Rat.* Let her instruct her tongue to bear your mes-  
sage;



Teach every grace to smile in your behalf,  
And her deluded eyes to gloat for you ;  
His ductile reason will be wound about,  
Be led and turn'd again, say and unsay,  
Receive the yoke, and yield exact obedience.

*Glost.* Your counsel likes me well, it shall be followed.

She waits without, attending on her suit.  
Go, call her in, and leave us here alone.

[*Exeunt Ratcliffe and Catesby.*]

How poor a thing is he, how worthy scorn,  
Who leaves the guidance of imperial manhood  
To such a paltry piece of stuff as this is !  
A moppet made of prettiness and pride ;  
That oftener does her giddy fancies change,  
Than glittering dew-drops in the sun do colours—  
Now, shame upon it ! was our reason given  
For such a use ! “ To be thus puff'd about  
“ Like a dry leaf, an idle straw, a feather,  
“ The sport of every whiffling blast that blows ?  
“ Beshrew my heart, but it is wond'rous strange ;”  
Sure there is something more than witchcraft in them,  
That masters ev'n the wisest of us all.

*Enter JANE SHORE.*

Oh ! you are come most fitly. We have ponder'd  
On this your grievance : and tho' some there are,  
Nay, and those great ones too, who wou'd enforce  
The rigour of our power to afflict you,  
And bear a heavy hand ; yet fear not you :

We've ta'en you to our favour ; our protection  
Shall stand between, and shield you from mishap.

*J. Sh.* The blessings of a heart with anguish broken,  
And rescu'd from despair, attend your highness.

Alas ! my gracious lord, what have I done  
To kindle such relentless wrath against me ?

" If in the days of all my past offences,

" When most my heart was lifted with delight,

" If I withheld my morsel from the hungry,

" Forgot the widow's want, and orphan's cry ;

" If I have known a good I have not shar'd,

" Nor call'd the poor to take his portion with me,

" Let my worst enemies stand forth, and now

" Deny the succour, which I gave not then."

*Glost.* Marry there are, tho' I believe them not,  
Who say you meddle in affairs of state :

That you presume to prattle, like a busy-body,

Give your advice, and teach the lords o' th' council

What fits the order of the common-weal.

*J. Sh.* Oh, that the busy world, at least in this,

Would take example from a wretch like me !

None then would waste their hours in foreign thoughts,

Forget themselves, and what concerns their peace,

" To tread the mazes of fantastic falsehood,

" To haunt their idle sounds and flying tales,

" Thro' all the giddy, noisy courts of rumour ;

" Malicious slander never would have leisure"

To search, with prying eyes, for faults abroad,

If all, like me, consider'd their own hearts,

And wept the sorrows which they found at home.

*Glost.* Go to! I know your pow'r; and tho' I trust  
not

To ev'ry breath of fame, I'm not to learn  
That Hastings is profess'd your loving vassal.  
But fair befall your beauty: use it wisely,  
And it may stand your fortunes much in stead,  
Give back your forfeit land with large increase,  
And place you high in safety and in honour.  
Nay, I could point a way, the which pursuing,  
You shall not only bring yourself advantage,  
But give the realm much worthy cause to thank you

*J. Sh.* Oh! where or how—Can my unworthy  
hand

Become an instrument of good to any?  
Instruct your lowly slave, and let me fly  
To yield obedience to your dread command.

*Glost.* Why, that's well said—Thus then—Observe  
me well,

The state, for many high and potent reasons,  
Deeming my brother Edward's sons unfit  
For the imperial weight of England's crown—

*J. Sh.* Alas! for pity.

*Glost.* Therefore have resolv'd  
To set aside their unavailing infancy,  
And vest the sov'reign rule in abler hands.  
This, tho' of great importance to the public,  
Hastings, for very peevishness and spleen,  
Does stubbornly oppose.

*J. Sh.* Does he? Does Hastings?

*Glost.* Ay, Hastings.

*J. Sh.* Reward him for the noble deed, just Heav'ns;  
For this one action, guard him and distinguish him  
With signal mercies, and with great deliverance,  
Save him from wrong, adversity, and shame.  
Let never fading honours flourish round him,  
And consecrate his name, ev'n to time's end :  
“ Let him know nothing else but good on earth,  
“ And everlasting blessedness hereafter.”

*Glost.* How now !

*J. Sh.* The poor, forsaken, royal little ones !  
Shall they be left a prey to savage power ?  
Can they lift up their harmless hands in vain,  
Or cry to Heaven for help, and not be heard ?  
Impossible ! Oh, gallant, generous Hastings,  
Go on, pursue ! assert the sacred cause :  
Stand forth, thou proxy of all-ruling Providence,  
And save the friendless infants from oppression.  
Saints shall assist thee with prevailing prayers,  
And warring angels combat on thy side.

*Glost.* You're passing rich in this same heav'nly  
speech,

And spend it at your pleasure. Nay, but mark me !  
My favour is not bought with words like these.  
Go to—you'll teach your tongue another tale.

*J. Sh.* No, tho' the royal Edward has undone me,  
He was my king, my gracious master still ;  
“ He lov'd me too, tho' 'twas a guilty flame,  
“ And fatal to my peace, yet still he lov'd me ;  
“ With fondness, and with tenderness he doated,  
“ Dwelt in my eyes, and liv'd but in my smiles : ”

And can I—O my heart abhors the thought !  
Stand by, and see his children robb'd of right ?

*Glost.* Dare not, ev'n for thy soul, to thwart me  
further !

None of your arts, your feigning and your foolery ;  
Your dainty squeamish coying it to me ;  
Go—to your lord, your paramour, begone !  
Lisp in his ear, hang wanton on his neck,  
And play your monkey gambols o'er to him.  
You know my purpose, look that you pursue it,  
And make him yield obedience to my will.  
Do it—or woe upon thy harlot's head.

*J. Sh.* Oh, that my tongue had ev'ry grace of speech,  
Great and commanding as the breath of kings,  
“ Sweet as the poet's numbers, and prevailing  
“ As soft persuasion to a love-sick maid ;”  
That I had art and eloquence divine,  
To pay my duty to my master's ashes,  
And plead, till death, the cause of injur'd innocence.

*Glost.* Ha ! Dost thou brave me, minion ! Dost  
thou know  
How vile, how very a wretch, my pow'r can make  
thee ?

“ That I can let loose fear, distress, and famine,  
“ To hunt thy heels, like hell-hounds, thro' the  
world ;”

That I can place thee in such abject state,  
As help shall never find thee ; where, repining,  
Thou shalt sit down and gnaw the earth for anguish ;  
Groan to the pitiless winds without return ;

Howl like the midnight wolf amidst the desert,  
And curse thy life, in bitterness and misery?

*J. Sk.* Let me be branded for the public scorn,  
Turn'd forth and driven to wander like a vagabond,  
Be friendless and forsaken, seek my bread  
Upon the barren wild, and desolate waste,  
Feed on my sighs, and drink my falling tears,  
E'er I consent to teach my lips injustice,  
Or wrong the orphan who has none to save him.

*Glost.* 'Tis well—we'll try the temper of your heart,  
What ho! who waits without?

*Enter RATCLIFFE, CATESBY, and Attendants.*

*Rat.* Your highness' pleasure——

*Glost.* Go, some of you, and turn this strumpet forth!  
Spurn her into the street; there let her perish,  
And rot upon a dunghill. Thro' the city  
See it proclaim'd, that none, on pain of death,  
Presume to give her comfort, food, or harbour;  
Who ministers the smallest comfort, dies.  
Her house, her costly furniture and wealth,  
“The purchase of her loose luxurious life,  
We seize on, for the profit of the state.  
Away! Be gone!

*J. Sk.* Oh, thou most righteous judge—  
Humbly behold, I bow myself to thee,  
And own thy justice in this hard decree:  
No longer, then, my ripe offences spare,  
But what I merit, let me learn to bear.  
Yet since 'tis all my wretchedness can give,

For my past crimes my forfeit life receive ;  
No pity for my sufferings here I crave,  
And only hope forgiveness in the grave.

[Exit J. Shore, guarded by Catesby and others.

Glost. So much for this. Your project's at an end.

[To Rat.

This idle toy, this hilding scorns my power,  
And sets us all at naught. See that a guard  
Be ready at my call.—

Rat. The council waits

Upon your highness' leisure.—

Glost. Bid them enter.

*Enter the Duke of BUCKINGHAM, Earl of DERBY,  
Bishop of ELY, Lord HASTINGS, and others as to the  
council. The Duke of GLOSTER takes his place at the  
upper end, then the rest sit.*

Derb. In happy times we are assembled here,  
To point the day, and fix the solemn pomp,  
For placing England's crown, with all due rites,  
Upon our sov'reign Edward's youthful brow.

Hast. Some busy meddling knaves, 'tis said, there are,  
As such will still be prating, who presume  
To carp and cavil at his royal right ;  
Therefore, I hold it fitting, with the soonest,  
T' appoint the order of the coronation !  
So to approve our duty to the king,  
And stay the babbling of such vain gainsayers.

Derb. We all attend to know your highness' pleasure.

[To Gloster.

*Glost.* My lords, a set of worthy men you are,  
Prudent and just, and careful for the state;  
Therefore, to your most grave determination  
I yield myself in all things; and demand  
What punishment your wisdom shall think meet  
To inflict upon those damnable contrivers,  
Who shall with potions, charms; and witching drugs,  
Practise against our person and our life?

*Hast.* So much I hold the king your highness'  
debtor,  
So precious are you to the common-weal,  
That I presume, not only for myself,  
But in behalf of these my noble brothers,  
To say, whoe'er they be, they merit death.

*Glost.* Then judge yourselves, convince your eyes  
of truth:

Behold my arm, thus blasted, dry, and wither'd,  
[*Pulling up his sleeves.*

Shrunk like a foul abortion, and decay'd,  
Like some untimely product of the seasons.  
Robb'd of its properties of strength and office.  
This is the sorcery of Edward's wife,  
Who, in conjunction with that harlot Shore,  
And other like confed'rate midnight hags,  
By force of potent spells, of bloody characters,  
And conjurations horrible to hear,  
Call fiends and spectres from the yawning deep,  
And set the ministers of hell at work,  
To torture and despoil me of my life.

*Hast.* If they have done this deed—



*Glost.* If they have done it!  
Talk'st thou to me of If's, audacious traitor!  
Thou art that strumpet witch's chief abettor,  
The patron and comploter of her mischiefs,  
And join'd in this contrivance for my death.  
Nay start, not, lords—What ho! a guard there, Sirs!

*Enter Guards.*

Lord Hastings, I arrest thee of high treason.  
Seize him, and bear him instantly away.  
He sha' not live an hour. By holy Paul,  
I will not dine before his head be brought me.  
Ratcliffe, stay you, and see that it be done:  
The rest that love me, rise and follow me.

[*Exit GLOSTER, and the Lords following.*]

*Remain Lord HASTINGS, RATCLIFFE, and Guards.*

*Hast.* What! and no more but this—How! to the scaffold:

Oh, gentle Ratcliffe! tell me, do I hold thee?  
Or if I dream, what shall I do to wake,  
To break, to struggle thro' this dread confusion?  
For surely death itself is not so painful  
As is this sudden horror and surprise.

*Rat.* You heard, the duke's commands to me were absolute.

Therefore, my lord, address you to your shrift,  
With all good speed you may. Summon your courage,  
And be yourself; for you must die this instant.

*Hast.* Yes, Ratcliffe, I will take thy friendly counsel

And die as a man should ; 'tis somewhat hard,  
To call my scatter'd spirits home at once :  
But since what must be, must be—let necessity  
Supply the place of time and preparation,  
And arm me for the blow. 'Tis but to die,  
'Tis but to venture on that common hazard,  
Which many a time in battle I have run ;  
“ 'Tis but to do, what at that very moment,  
“ In many nations of the peopled earth,  
“ A thousand and a thousand shall do with me ;”  
'Tis but to close my eyes and shut out day-light,  
To view no more the wicked ways of men,  
No longer to behold the tyrant Gloster,  
And be a weeping witness of the woes,  
The desolation, slaughter, and calamities,  
Which he shall bring on this unhappy land.

*Enter ALICIA.*

*Alic.* Stand off, and let me pass—I will I must  
Catch him once more in these despairing arms,  
And hold him to my heart—O Hastings ! Hastings !

*Hast.* Alas ! why com'st thou at this dreadful moment,

To fill me with new terrors, new distractions ;  
To turn me wild with thy distemper'd rage ;  
And shock the peace of my departing soul ?  
Away, I pr'ythee leave me !

*Alic.* Stop a minute——  
Till my full griets find passage—Oh, the tyrant !  
Perdition fall on Gloster's head and mine.

*Hast.* What means thy frantic grief ?

*Alic.* I cannot speak——

But I have murder'd thee—Oh, I could tell thee !

*Hast.* Speak and give ease to thy conflicting passion,  
Be quick, nor keep me longer in suspense,  
Time presses, and a thousand crowding thoughts  
Break in at once ! this way and that they snatch,  
They tear my hurry'd soul : All claim attention,  
And yet not one is heard. Oh ! speak, and leave me,  
For I have business would employ an age,  
And but a minute's time to get it done in.

*Alic.* That, that's my grief—'tis I that urge thee on,  
Thus haunt thee to the toil, sweep thee from earth,  
And drive thee down this precipice of fate.

*Hast.* Thy reason is grown wild. Could thy weak  
hand

Bring on this mighty ruin ? If it could,  
What have I done so grievous to thy soul,  
So deadly, so beyond the reach of pardon,  
That nothing but my life can make atonement ?

*Alic.* Thy cruel scorn hath stung me to the heart,  
And set my burning bosom all in flames :  
Raving and mad I flew to my revenge,  
And writ I know not what—told the protector,  
That Shore's detested wife, by wiles, had won thee  
To plot against his greatness—He believ'd it,  
(Oh, dire event of my pernicious counsel !)  
And, while I meant destruction on her head,  
H' has turn'd it all on thine.

“ *Hast.* Accursed jealousy !

“ Oh, merciless, wild, and unforgiving fiend !  
“ Blindfold it runs to undistinguish’d mischief,  
“ And murders all it meets. Curs’d be its rage;  
“ For there is none so deadly; doubly curs’d  
“ Be all those easy fools who give it harbour ;  
“ Who turn a monster loose among mankind;  
“ Fiercer than famine, war, or spotted pestilence ;  
“ Baneful as death, and horrible as hell.

“ *Alic.* If thou wilt curse, curse rather thine own  
falsehood ;

“ Curse the lewd maxims of thy perjur’d sex,  
“ Which taught thee first to laugh at faith and justice ;  
“ To scorn the solemn sanctity of oaths,  
“ And make a jest of a poor woman’s ruin :  
“ Curse thy proud heart, and thy insulting tongue,  
“ That rais’d this fatal fury in my soul,  
“ And urg’d my vengeance to undo us both.”

*Hast.* Oh, thou inhuman ! Turn thy eyes away,  
And blast me not with their destructive beams :  
Why should I curse thee with my dying breath ?  
Begone ! and let me die in peace.

*Alic.* Can’st thou—Oh, cruel Hastings, leave me  
thus !

Hear me, I beg thee—I conjure thee, hear me !  
While with an agonizing heart, I swear,  
By all the pangs I feel, by all the sorrows,  
The terrors and despair thy loss shall give me,  
My hate was on my rival bent alone.  
Oh ! had I once divin’d, false as thou art,  
A danger to thy life, I would have dy’d,

I would have met it for thee, and made bare  
My ready faithful breast to save thee from it.

*Hast* Now mark! and tremble at Heaven's just  
award:

While thy insatiate wrath and fell revenge,  
Pursu'd the innocence which never wrong'd thee,  
Behold, the mischief falls on thee and me:  
Remorse and heaviness of heart shall wait thee,  
And everlasting anguish be thy portion:  
For me, the snares of death are wound about me,  
And now, in one poor moment, I am gone.  
Oh! if thou hast one tender thought remaining,  
Fly to thy closet, fall upon thy knees,  
And recommend my parting soul to mercy.

*Alic.* Oh! yet before I go for ever from thee,  
Turn thee in gentleness and pity to me, [Kneeling.  
And, in compassion of my strong affliction,  
Say, is it possible you can forgive  
The fatal rashness of ungovern'd love?  
For, oh! 'tis certain, if I had not lov'd thee  
Beyond my peace, my reason, fame, and life,  
"Desir'd to death, and doated to distraction,"  
This day of horror never should have known us.

*Hast.* Oh, rise, and let me hush thy stormy sor-  
rows. [Raising her,

Assuage thy tears, for I will chide no more,  
No more upbraid thee, thou unhappy fair one.  
I see the hand of Heav'n is arm'd against me;  
And, in mysterious Providence, decrees  
To punish me by thy mistaken hand.

Most righteous doom! for, Oh, while I behold thee,  
Thy wrongs rise up in terrible array,  
And charge thy ruin on me; thy fair fame,  
Thy spotless beauty, innocence, and youth,  
Dishonour'd, blasted, and betray'd by me.

*Alic.* And does thy heart relent for my undoing?  
Oh, that inhuman Gloster could be mov'd,  
But half so easily as I can pardon!

*Hast.* Here then exchange we mutually forgiveness:  
So may the guilt of all my broken vows,  
My perjuries to thee, be all forgotten,  
As here my soul acquits thee of my death,  
As here I part without one angry thought,  
As here I leave thee with the softest tenderness,  
Mourning the chance of our disastrous loves,  
And begging Heav'n to bless and to support thee.

*Rat.* My lord, dispatch; the duke has sent to chide  
me,  
For loitering in my duty——

*Hast.* I obey.

*Alic.* Insatiate, savage monster! Is a moment  
So tedious to thy malice? Oh, repay him,  
Thou great avenger! Give him blood for blood:  
Guilt haunt him! fiends pursue him! lightnings blast  
him!

“Some horrid, cursed kind of death o’ertake him,  
“Sudden, and in the fulness of his sins!”  
That he may know how terrible it is,  
To want that moment he denies thee now.

*Hast.* This rage is all in vain, “that tears thy bosom;

" Like a poor bird that flutters in its cage,  
 " Thou beat'st thyself to death." Retire, I beg thee;  
 To see thee thus, thou know'st not how it wounds me;  
 Thy agonies are added to my own,  
 And make the burthen more than I can bear.  
 Farewell—Good angels visit thy afflictions,  
 And bring thee peace and comfort from above.

*Alic.* Oh! stab me to the heart, some pitying hand.  
 Now strike me dead——

*Hast.* One thing I had forgot——  
 I charge thee, by our present common miseries;  
 By our past loves, if yet they have a name;  
 By all thy hopes of peace here and hereafter,  
 Let not the rancour of thy hate pursue  
 The innocence of thy unhappy friend;  
 Thou know'st who 'tis I mean; Oh! should'st thou  
 wrong her,

Just Heav'n shall double all thy woes upon thee,  
 And make 'em know no end—Remember this,  
 As the last warning of a dying man.  
 Farewell, for ever! [*The guards carry Hastings off.*]

*Alic.* For ever! Oh, for ever!  
 Oh, who can bear to be a wretch for ever!  
 My rival, too! His last thoughts hung on her,  
 And as he parted, left a blessing for her:  
 Shall she be blest, and I be curst, for ever?  
 No; since her fatal beauty was the cause  
 Of all my suff'rings, let her share my pains;  
 Let her, like me, of ev'ry joy forlorn,  
 Devote the hour when such a wretch was born;

“ Like me, to desarts and to darkness run,  
“ Abhor the day, and curse the golden sun ;”  
Cast ev’ry good, and ev’ry hope behind ;  
Detest the works of nature, loath mankind :  
Like me, with cries distracted, fill the air,  
Tear her poor bosom, rend her frantic hair ;  
And prove the torments of the last despair. [Exit.

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ACT V. SCENE I.

*The Street. Enter BELMOUR and DUMONT.*

*Dumont.*

YOU saw her, then ?

*Bel.* I met her, as returning,  
In solemn penance from the public cross.  
Before her, certain rascal officers,  
Slaves in authority, the knaves of justice,  
Proclaim’d the tyrant Glöster’s cruel orders.  
“ On either side her march’d an ill-look’d priest,  
“ Who with severe, with horrid haggard eyes,  
“ Did, ever and anon, by turns, upbraid her,  
“ And thunder in her trembling ear damnation.”  
Around her, numberless, the rabble flow’d,  
Should’ring each other, crowding for a view,  
Gaping and gazing, taunting and reviling ;  
Some pitying—but those, alas ! how few !  
The most, such iron hearts we are, and such  
The base barbarity of human kind,



With insolence and lewd reproach pursu'd her,  
Hooting and railing, and with villanous hands  
Gath'ring the filth from out the common ways,  
To hurl upon her head.

*Dum.* Inhuman dogs !  
How did she bear it ?

*Bel.* With the gentlest patience ;  
Submissive, sad, and lowly was her look ;  
A burning taper in her hand she bore,  
And on her shoulders carelessly confus'd,  
With loose neglect, her lovely tresses hung ;  
Upon her cheek a faintish flush was spread ;  
Feeble she seem'd, and sorely smit with pain.  
While barefoot as she trod the flinty pavement,  
Her footsteps all along were mark'd with blood.  
Yet, silent still she pass'd and unrepining ;  
Her streaming eyes bent ever on the earth,  
Except when in some bitter pang of sorrow,  
To Heav'n she seem'd in fervent zeal to raise,  
And beg that mercy man deny'd her here.

*Dum.* When was this piteous sight ?

*Bel.* These last two days.  
You know my care was wholly bent on you,  
To find the happy means of your deliverance,  
Which but for Hastings' death I had not gain'd.  
During that time, altho' I have not seen her,  
Yet divers trusty messengers I've sent,  
To wait about, and watch a fit convenience  
To give her some relief, but all in vain ;  
A churlish guard attends upon her steps,

Who menace those with death, that bring her comfort,

And drive all succour from her.

*Dum.* Let 'em threaten ;

Let proud oppression prove its fiercest malice ;

So Heav'n befriend my soul, as here I vow

To give her help, and share one fortune with her.

*Bel.* Mean you to see her, thus, in your own form ?

*Dum.* I do.

*Bel.* And have you thought upon the consequence ?

*Dum.* What is there I should fear ?

*Bel.* Have you examin'd

Into your inmost heart, and try'd at leisure

The sev'ral secret springs that move the passions ?

Has mercy fix'd her empire there so sure,

That wrath and vengeance never may return ?

Can you resume a husband's name, and bid

That wakeful dragon, fierce resentment, sleep ?

“ *Dum.* Why dost thou search so deep, and urge  
my memory,

“ To conjure up my wrongs to life again ?

“ I have long labour'd to forget myself,

“ To think on all time backward, like a space

“ Idle and void, where nothing e'er had being ;

“ But thou hast peopled it again : Revenge

“ And jealousy renew their horrid forms,

“ Shoot all their fires, and drive me to distraction.

“ *Bel.* Far be the thought from me ! My care was  
only

“ To arm you for the meeting : better were it

" Never to see her, than to let that name  
 " Recall forgotten rage, and make the husband  
 " Destroy the gen'rous pity of Dumont."

*Dum.* O thou hast set my busy brain at work,  
 And now she musters up a train of images,  
 Which, to preserve my peace, I had cast aside,  
 And sunk in deep oblivion—Oh, that form!  
 That angel face on which my dotage hung!  
 How I have gaz'd upon her, till my soul  
 With very eagerness went forth towards her,  
 And issu'd at my eyes—Was there a gem  
 Which the sun ripens in the Indian mine,  
 Or the rich bosom of the ocean yields;  
 What was there art could make, or wealth could buy,  
 Which I have left unsought to deck her beauty?  
 What could her king do more?—And yet she fled.

*Bel.* Away with that sad fancy——

*Dum.* Oh, that day!

The thought of it must live for ever with me.  
 I met her, Belmour, when the royal spoiler  
 Bore her in triumph from my widow'd home!  
 Within his chariot, by his side she sat,  
 And listen'd to his talk with downward looks,  
 'Till sudden as she chanc'd aside to glance,  
 Her eyes encounter'd mine—Oh! then my friend!  
 Oh! who can paint my grief and her amazement!  
 As at the stroke of death, twice turn'd she pale;  
 And twice a burning crimson blush'd all o'er her;  
 Then, with a shriek, heart-wounding, loud she cry'd,  
 While down her cheeks two gushing torrents ran

Fast falling on her hands, which thus she wrung——  
Mov'd at her grief, the tyrant ravisher,  
With courteous action woo'd her oft to turn;  
Earnest he seem'd to plead, but all in vain;  
Ev'n to the last she bent her sight towards me,  
And follow'd me——till I had lost myself.

*Bel.* Alas, for pity! Oh! those speaking tears!  
Could they be false? Did she not suffer with you?  
For though the king by force possess'd her person,  
Her unconsenting heart dwelt still with you;  
If all her former woes were not enough,  
Look on her now; behold her where she wanders,  
Hunted to death, distress'd on every side,  
With no one hand to help; and tell me then,  
If ever misery were known like hers?

*Dum.* And can she bear it? Can that delicate frame  
Endure the beating of a storm so rude?  
Can she, for whom the various seasons chang'd  
To court her appetite and crown her board,  
For whom the foreign vintages were press'd,  
For whom the merchant spread his silken stores,  
Can she——

Intreat for bread, and want the needful raiment,  
To wrap her shiv'ring bosom from the weather?  
When she was mine, no care came ever nigh her;  
I thought the gentlest breeze that wakes the spring,  
Too rough to breathe upon her; cheerfulness  
Danc'd all the day before her, and at night  
Soft slumbers waited on her downy pillow——  
Now sad and shelterless, perhaps, she lies,

Where piercing winds blow sharp, and the chill rain  
Drops from some pent-house on her wretched head,  
Drenches her locks, and kills her with the cold.  
It is too much——Hence with her past offences,  
They are aton'd at full——Why stay we, then?  
Oh! let us haste, my friend, and find her out.

*Bel.* Somewhere about this quarter of the town,  
I hear the poor abandon'd creature lingers:  
Her guard, tho' set with strictest watch to keep  
All food and friendship from her, yet permit her  
To wander in the streets, there choose her bed,  
And rest her head on what cold stone she pleases.

*Dum.* Here let us then divide; each in his round  
To search her sorrows out; whose hap it is  
First to behold her, this way let him lead  
Her fainting steps, and meet we here together.

[*Exeunt.*]

*Enter JANE SHORE, her hair hanging loose on her shoulders, and bare-footed.*

*J. Sh.* Yet, yet endure, nor murmur, oh, my soul!  
For are not thy transgressions great and numberless?  
Do they not cover thee like rising floods,  
And press thee like a weight of waters down?  
“Does not the hand of righteousness afflict thee?”  
“And who shall plead against it? Who shall say  
“To pow'r almighty, thou hast done enough;  
“Or bid his dreadful rod of vengeance stay?”  
Wait then with patience, till the circling hours  
Shall bring the time of thy appointed rest,

And lay thee down in death. "The hireling thus  
"With labour drudges out the painful day,  
"And often looks with long expecting eyes  
"To see the shadows rise, and be dismiss'd."  
And hark, methinks the roar that late pursu'd me,  
Sinks like the murmurs of a falling wind,  
And softens into silence. Does revenge  
And malice then grow weary, and forsake me?  
My guard, too, that observ'd me still so close,  
Tire in the task of their inhuman office,  
And loiter far behind. Alas! I faint,  
My spirits fail at once—This is the door  
Of my Alicia—Blessed opportunity!  
I'll steal a little succour from her goodness,  
Now while no eye observes me. [*She knocks at the door.*]

*Enter a Servant.*

Is your lady,  
My gentle friend, at home! Oh! bring me to her.

[*Going in.*]

*Ser.* Hold, mistress, whither would you?

[*Pulling her back.*]

*J. Sh.* Do you not know me?

*Ser.* I know you well, and know my orders, too:  
You must not enter here——

*J. Sh.* Tell my Alicia,  
'Tis I would see her.

*Ser.* She is ill at ease,  
And will admit no visitor.

*J. Sh.* But tell her

'Tis I, her friend, the partner of her heart,  
Wait at the door and beg——

Ser. 'Tis all in vain,—

Go hence, and howl to those that will regard you.

[*Shuts the door, and exit.*]

J. Sh. It was not always thus; the time has been,  
When this unfriendly door, that bars my passage,  
Flew wide, and almost leap'd from off its hinges,  
To give me entrance here; “when this good house  
“Has pour'd forth all its dwellers to receive me:”  
When my approaches made a little holiday,  
And every face was dress'd in smiles to meet me:  
But now 'tis otherwise; and those who bless'd me,  
Now curse me to my face. Why should I wander,  
Stray further on, for I can die ev'n here!

[*She sits down at the door.*]

*Enter ALICIA in disorder, two Servants following.*

Alic. What wretch art thou, whose misery and  
baseness

Hangs on my door; whose hateful whine of woe  
Breaks in upon my sorrows, and distracts  
My jarring senses with thy beggar's cry?

J. Sh. A very beggar, and a wretch, indeed;  
One driven by strong calamity to seek  
For succours here; one perishing for want,  
Whose hunger has not tasted food these three days;  
And humbly asks, for charity's dear sake,  
A draught of water and a little bread.

Alic. And dost thou come to me, to me for bread?

It is my Hastings! see he wafts me on!

Away! I go, I fly! I follow thee!

“ But come not thou with mischief-making beauty

“ To interpose between us, look not on him,

“ Give thy fond arts and thy delusions o’er,

“ For thou shalt never, never part us more.

*[She runs off, her Servants following.]*

*J. Sh.* Alas! she raves; her brain, I fear is turn’d.

In mercy look upon her, gracious Heav’n,

Nor visit her for any wrong to me.

Sure I am near upon my journey’s end;

My head runs round, my eyes begin to fail,

And dancing shadows swim before my sight.

I can no more, *[Lies down.]* receive me, thou cold  
earth,

Thou common parent, take me to thy bosom,

And let me rest with thee.

*Enter BELMOUR.*

*Bel.* Upon the ground!

Thy miseries can never lay thee lower,

Look up, thou poor afflicted one! thou mourner,

Whom none has comforted! Where are thy friends,

The dear companions of thy joyful days,

Whose hearts thy warm prosperity made glad,

Whose arms were taught to grow like ivy round thee,

And bind thee to their bosoms?—Thus with thee,

Thus let us live, and let us die, they said,

“ For sure thou art the sister of our loves,

“ And nothing shall divide us”—Now where are they?



*J. Sh.* Ah, Belmour! where indeed? They stand  
aloof,

And view my desolation from afar?

"When they pass by, they shake their heads in scorn,

"And cry, behold the harlot and her end!"

And yet thy goodness turns aside to pity me.

Alas! there may be danger; get thee gone?

Let me not pull a ruin on thy head.

Leave me to die alone, for I am fall'n

Never to rise, and all relief is vain.

*Bel.* Yet raise thy drooping head; for I am come

To chase away despair. Behold! where yonder

That honest man, that faithful, brave Dumont,

Is hasting to thy aid——

*J. Sh.* Dumont! Ha! where!

*[Raising herself, and looking about.]*

Then Heav'n has heard my pray'r; his very name

Renews the springs of life, and cheers my soul.

Has he then 'scap'd the snare?

*Bel.* He has; but see——

He comes unlike to that Dumont you knew,

For now he wears your better angel's form,

And comes to visit you with peace and pardon.

*Enter SHORE.*

*J. Sh.* Speak, tell me! Which is he? And how  
what would

This dreadful vision! See it comes upon me——

It is my husband——Ah!

*[She swoons.]*

*Sh.* She faints! support her!

H

“ Sustain her head, while I infuse this cordial  
“ Into her dying lips—from spicy drugs,  
“ Rich herbs and flow’rs, the potent juice is drawn;  
“ With wond’rous force it strikes the lazy spirits,  
“ Drives them around, and wakens life anew.”

*Bel.* Her weakness could not bear the strong surprise.

But see, she stirs! And the returning blood  
Faintly begins to blush again, and kindle  
Upon her ashy cheek——

*Sh.* So—gently raise her— [Raising her up.]

*J. Sh.* Ha! What art thou?—Belmour!

*Bel.* How fare you, lady?

*J. Sh.* My heart is thrill’d with horror——

*Bel.* Be of courage——

Your husband lives! ’tis he, my worthiest friend——

*J. Sh.* Still art thou there!—Still dost thou hover  
round me!

Oh, save me, Belmour, from his angry shade!

*Bel.* ’Tis he himself!—he lives! look up——

*J. Sh.* I dare not!

Oh! that my eyes could shut him out for ever——

*Sh.* Am I so hateful, then, so deadly to thee,  
To blast thy eyes with horror? Since I’m grown  
A burthen to the world, myself, and thee,  
Wou’d I had ne’er surviv’d to see thee more.

*J. Sh.* Oh! thou most injur’d—dost thou live, indeed!

Fall then, ye mountains, on my guilty head;  
Hide me, ye rocks, within your secret caverns;

Cast thy black veil upon my shame, O night!  
And shield me with thy sable wings for ever.

*S.* Why dost thou turn away?—Why tremble  
thus?

Why thus indulge thy fears? and in despair,  
Abandon thy distracted soul to horror?  
Cast every black and guilty thought behind thee,  
And let 'em never vex thy quiet more.  
My arms, my heart, are open to receive thee,  
To bring thee back to thy forsaken home,  
With tender joy, with fond forgiving love,  
And all the longings of my first desires.

*J. S.* No, arm thy brow with vengeance and  
appear

“The minister of Heaven’s inquiring justice.

“Array thyself all terrible for judgment,

“Wrath in thy eyes, and thunder in thy voice;

“Pronounce my sentence, and if yet there be

“A woe I have not felt, inflict it on me.

*S.* The measure of my sorrows is compleat!

“And I am come to snatch thee from injustice.

“The hand of pow’r no more shall crush thy weakness,

“Nor proud oppression grind thy humble soul.

*J. S.* Art thou not risen by miracle from death?

“Thy shroud is fall’n from off thee, and the grave

“Was bid to give thee up, that thou might’st come

“The messenger of grace and goodness to me,

“To seal my peace, and bless me e’er I go.

H ij

“ Oh ! let me then fall down beneath thy feet,  
“ And weep my gratitude for ever there ;  
“ Give me your drops, ye soft descending rains,  
“ Give me your streams, ye never ceasing springs,  
“ That my sad eyes may still supply my duty,  
“ And feed an everlasting flood of sorrow.

“ *Sh.* Waste not thy feeble spirits—I have long  
“ Beheld, unknown, thy mourning and repentance ;  
“ Therefore my heart has set aside the past,  
“ And holds thee white, as unoffending innocence :  
“ Therefore in spite of cruel Gloster’s rage,  
“ Soon as my friend had broke my prison doors,  
“ I flew to thy assistance.” Let us haste,  
Now while occasion seems to smile upon us,  
Forsake this place of shame, and find a shelter.

*J. Sh.* What shall I say to you ? But I obey—

*Sh.* Lean on my arm——

*J. Sh.* Alas ! I’m wond’rous faint :

But that’s not strange, I have not eat these three  
days.

*Sh.* Oh, merciless ! “ Look here, my love, I’ve  
brought thee

“ Some rich conserves——

“ *J. Sh.* How can you be so good ?

“ But you were ever thus. I well remember

“ With what fond care, what diligence of love,

“ You lavish’d out your wealth to buy me plea-  
sures,

“ Preventing every wish : have you forgot

" The costly string of pearl you brought me home,  
 " And ty'd about my neck ?——How could I leave  
 you ?

" *Sh.* Taste some of this, or this——

" *J. Sh.* You're strangely alter'd——

" Say, gentle Belmour, is he not ? How pale

" Your visage is become ? Your eyes are hollow ;

" Nay, you are wrinkled too——Alas, the day !

" My wretchedness has cost you many a tear,

" And many a bitter pang, since last we parted.

" *Sh.* No more of that——Thou talk'st, but do'st  
 not eat.

" *J. Sh.* My feeble jaws forget their common of-  
 fice,

" My tasteless tongue cleaves to the clammy roof,

" And now a gen'ral loathing grows upon me."

Oh ! I am sick at heart !——

*Sh.* Thou murd'rous sorrow !

Wo't thou still drink her blood, pursue her still !

Must she then die ! Oh, my poor penitent !

Speak peace to thy sad heart : she hears me not ;

Grief masters ev'ry sense——" help me to hold her"—

*Enter CATESBY, with a guard.*

*Cat.* Seize on 'em both, as traitors to the state——

*Bel.* What means this violence ?——

[*Guards lay hold on Shore and Belmour.*]

*Cat.* Have we not found you,

In scorn of the protector's strict command,

H ij

Assisting this base woman, and abetting  
Her infamy ?

*Sh.* Infamy on thy head !

Thou tool of power, thou pander to authority !  
I tell thee, knave, thou know'st of none so virtuous,  
And she that bore thee was an Æthiop to her.

*Cat.* You'll answer this at full—Away with 'em.

*Sh.* Is charity grown treason to your court ?  
What honest man would live beneath such rulers ?  
I am content that we should die together——

*Cat.* Convey the men to prison ; but for her,  
Leave her to hunt her fortune as she may.

*J. Sh.* I will not part with him——for me !——  
for me !

Oh ! must he die for me !

*[Following him as he is carried off—She falls.]*

*Sh.* Inhuman villains ! *[Breaks from the guards.]*  
Stand off ! The agonies of death are on her——  
She pulls, she gripes me hard with her cold hand.

*J. Sh.* Was this blow wanting to compleat my  
ruin ?

Oh ! let him go, ye ministers of terror.  
He shall offend no more, for I will die,  
And yield obedience to your cruel master.  
Tarry a little, but a little longer,  
And take my last breath with you.

*Sh.* Oh, my love !

“ Why have I liv'd to see this bitter moment,  
“ This grief by far surpassing all my former ? ”

Why dost thou fix thy dying eyes upon me,  
With such an earnest, such a piteous look,  
As if thy heart were full of some sad meaning  
Thou could'st not speak ?——

*J. Sh.* Forgive me!——but forgive me!

*Sh.* Be witness for me, ye celestial host,  
Such mercy and such pardon as my soul  
Accords to thee, and begs of Heav'n to shew thee ;  
May such befall me at my latest hour,  
And make my portion blest or curs'd for ever.

*J. Sh.* Then all is well, and I shall sleep in peace—  
'Tis very dark, and I have lost you now——  
Was there not something I would have bequeath'd  
you ?

But I have nothing left me to bestow,  
Nothing but one sad sigh. Oh! mercy, Heav'n!

[*Dies.*

*Bel.* There fled the soul,  
And left her load of misery behind.

*Sh.* Oh, my heart's treasure! Is this pale sad vi-  
sage

All that remains of thee? "Are these dead eyes  
"The light that cheer'd my soul?" Oh, heavy hour!  
But I will fix my trembling lips to thine,  
'Till I am cold and senseless quite, as thou art.  
What, must we part, then?——will you——

[*To the guards taking him away.*

Fare thee well——

[*Kissing her.*

Now execute your tyrant's will, and lead me  
To bonds, or death, 'tis equally indifferent.

*Bel.* Let those, who view this sad example, know,  
What fate attends the broken marriage vow ;  
And teach their children, in succeeding times,  
No common vengeance waits upon these crimes,  
When such severe repentance could not save  
From want, from shame, and an untimely grave.

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

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## EPILOGUE.

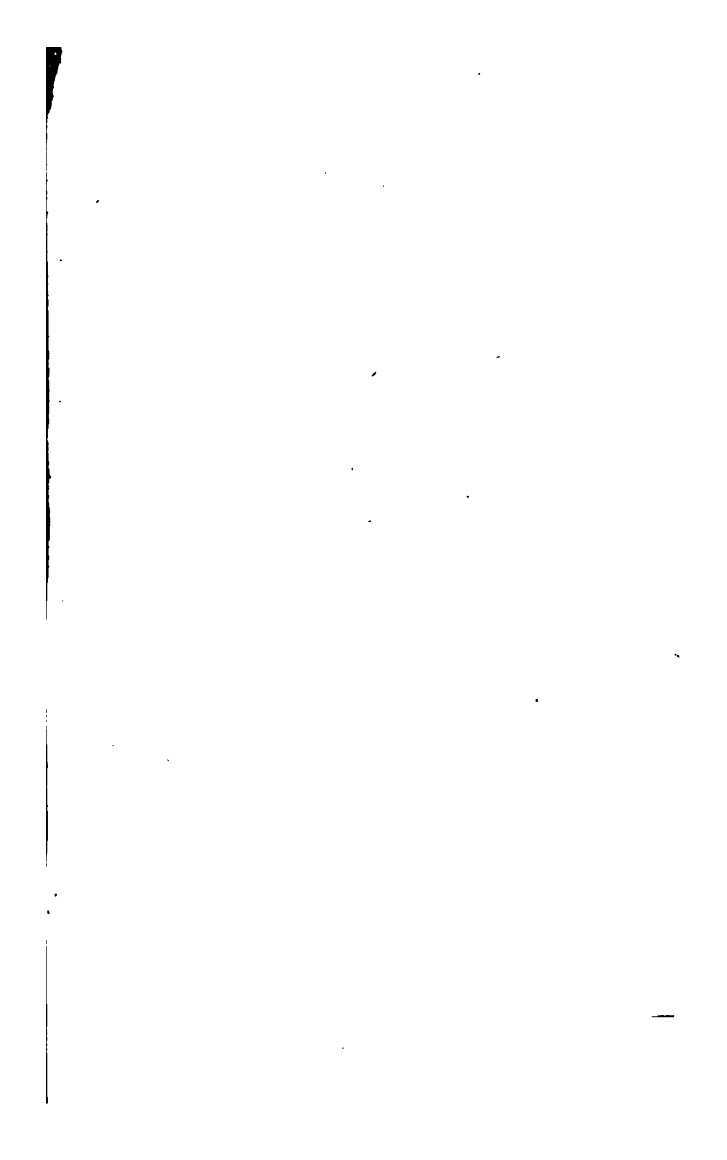
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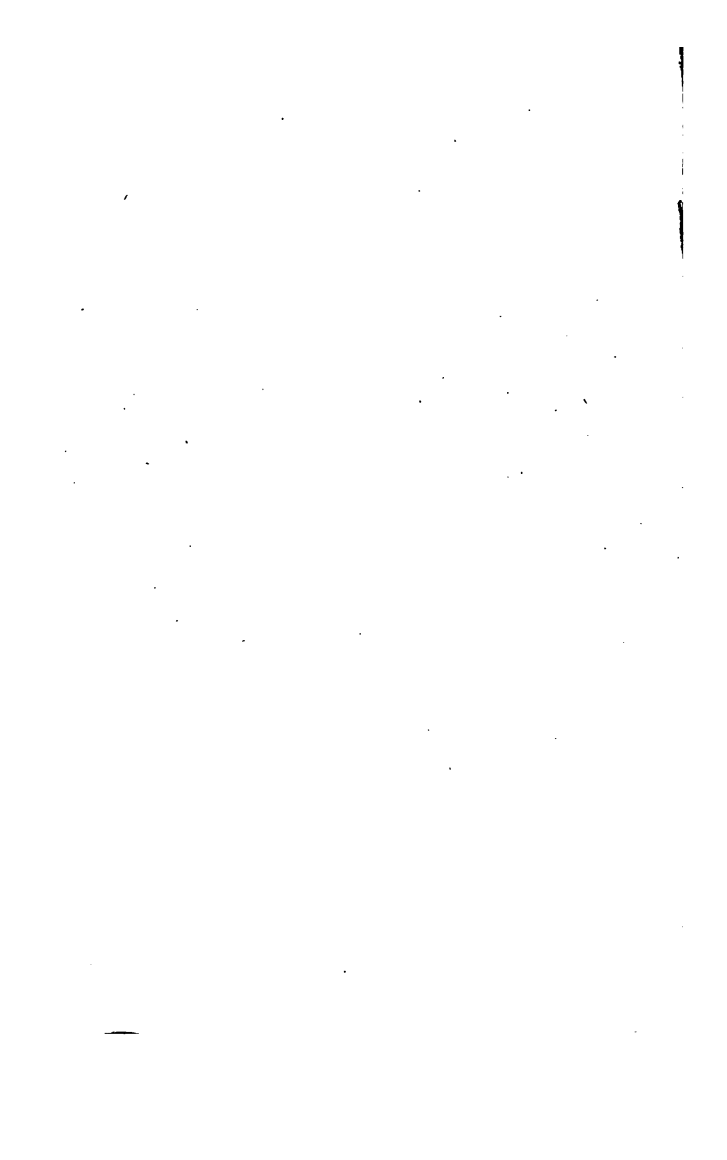
*YE modest matrons all, ye virtuous wives,  
Who lead with horrid husbands, decent lives ;  
You, who, for all you are in such a taking,  
To see your spouses drinking, gaming, raking,  
Yet make a conscience still of eachold-making ;  
What can we say your pardon to obtain ?  
This matter here was prov'd against poor Jane :  
She never once deny'd it ; but, in short,  
Whimper'd—and cry'd—" Sweet Sir, I'm sorry for't."  
'Twas well he met a kind, good-natur'd soul,  
We are not all so easy to control :  
I fancy one might find in this good town,  
Some wou'd ha' told the gentleman his own ;  
Have answer'd smart—" To what do you pretend,  
" Blockhead ?—As if I must not see a friend :  
" Tell me of hackney coaches—Jaunts to th' city—  
" Where should I buy my china ?—Faith, I'll fit ye"—  
Our wife was of a milder, meeker spirit ;  
You !—lords and masters !—was not that some merit ?  
Don't you allow it to be virtuous bearing,  
When we submit thus to your domineering ?  
Well, peace be with her, she did wrong most surely ;  
But so do many more who look demurely.  
Nor shou'd our mourning madam weep alone,  
There are more ways of wickedness than one.*

*If the reforming stage should fall to shaming  
Ill-nature, pride, hypocrisy, and gaming;  
The poets frequently might move compassion,  
And with she-tragedies o'er-run the nation.  
Then judge the fair offender with good-nature,  
And let your fellow-feeling curb your satire.  
What, if our neighbours have some little failing,  
Must we needs fall to damning and to railing?  
For her excuse too, be it understood,  
That if the woman was not quite so good,  
Her lover was a king, she flesh and blood.  
And since sh' has dearly paid the sinful score,  
Be kind at last, and pity poor Jane Shore.*

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THE END.





# **BOADICEA.**

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A

TRAGEDY,

BY MR. GLOVER.

---

ADAPTED FOR

**THEATRICAL REPRESENTATION,**

AS PERFORMED AT THE

**THEATRE-ROYAL, DRURY-LANE.**

---

REGULATED FROM THE PROMPT-BOOK,

*By Permission of the Managers.*

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“ The Lines distinguished by inverted Commas, are omitted in the Representation.”

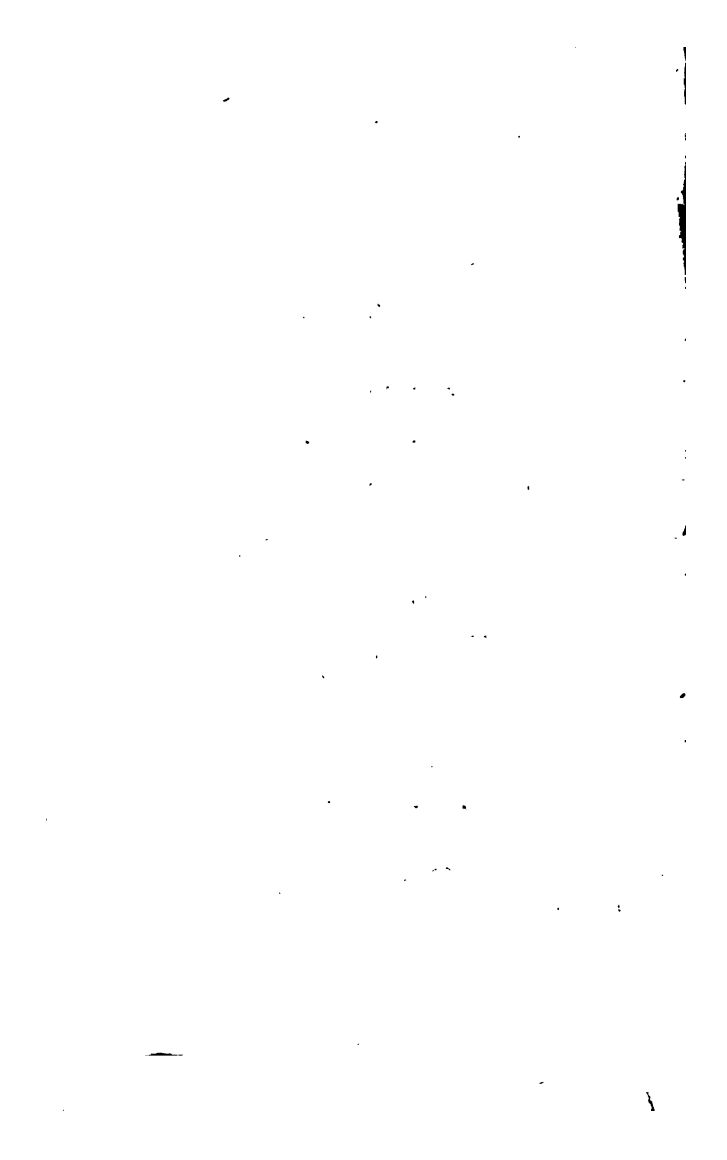
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LONDON:

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*Printed for the Proprietors, under the Direction of*  
JOHN BELL, *British Library*, STRAND,  
Bookseller to His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales.

MDCXCXI.



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## GLOVER,

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THE author of this play, was bred a merchant, and distinguished himself much in that character—yet in fortune he made no advances towards affluence. He was a patriot of the most independent cast, and scorning to bind himself about any one political party, was by all alike neglected.

However, there is a fame not resulting from so perishable a means as the contention of parties, which it is alike out of their power to confer or to take away—that fame will long flourish around the name of GLOVER—he was a POET.

HIS LEONIDAS has been illustrated by the learned commentaries of Dr. PEMBERTON, in a volume which, perhaps, best unfolds the mysteries of verse.

Mr. GLOVER was the author of two plays, both performed with much applause.

1 *Boadicea.*      2 *Medea.*

He had also projected a second part of the latter, not yet performed.

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## *BOADICEA*

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**H**As more poetic than histrionic powers—The descriptive passages are extremely fine—but there is small scope for passion.

It has been well observed by a venerable Prelate, that those universal robbers, the Romans, are treated in this piece with too much respect:—the observation from the same authority is also just respecting the languor of the three first acts—the last act is bold, fine, animated diction, and the events well arranged.

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## PROLOGUE.

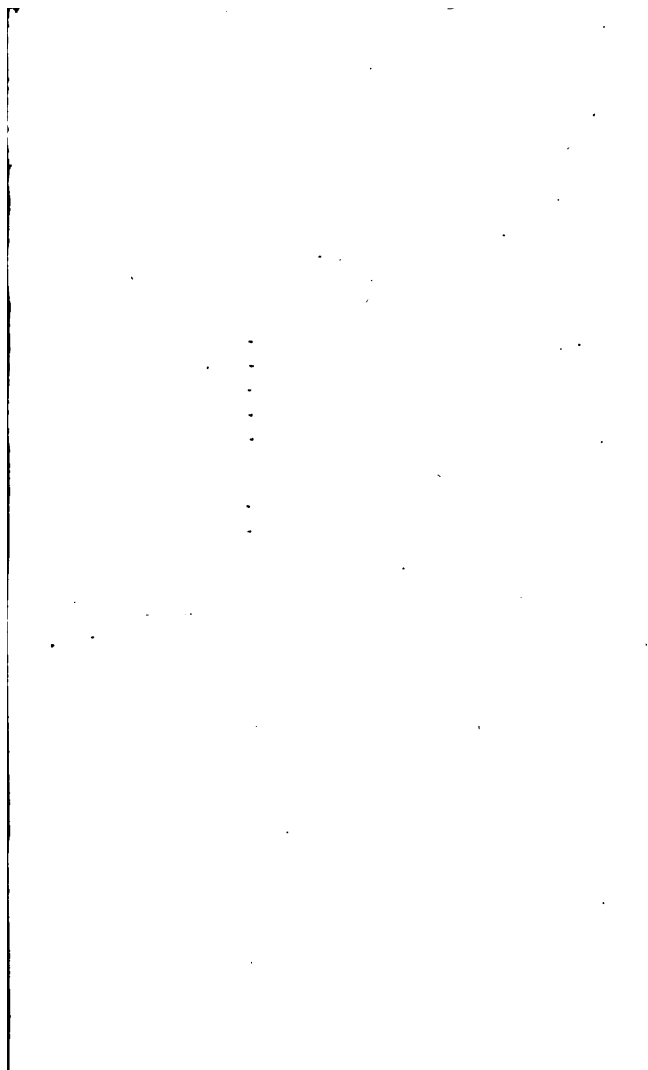
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*BESIDE his native Thames our poet long  
Hath hung his silent harp, and hush'd his song.  
Kind Commerce whisper'd, " See my blissful state,  
And to no smiles but mine resign thy fate ;  
Beneath the pregnant branches rest a while,  
Which by my culture spread this favour'd isle ;  
On that fair tree the fruits of ev'ry coast,  
All which the Ganges and the Volga boast,  
All which the sun's luxuriant beam supplies,  
Or slowly ripens under frozen skies,  
In mix'd variety of growth arise.  
The copious leaves beneficence diffuse,  
Which on affliction drops restoring dews,  
And birds of hope among the loaded sprays,  
Tune with enchantment their alluring lays,  
To cheer despondence and th' inactive raise.  
Rest here, she cry'd, and smiling time again  
May string the lyre, and I approve the strain."*  
*At length his muse from exile he recalls,  
Urg'd by his patrons in Augusta's walls.  
Those gen'rous traders, who alike sustain  
Their nation's glory on th' obedient main,  
And bounteous raise affliction's drooping train ;*

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*They, who benignant to his toils afford  
Their shel'ring favour, have his muse restor'd,  
They in her future fame will justly share,  
But her disgrace herself must singly bear ;  
Calm hours of learned leisure they have giv'n,  
And could no more, for genius is from heav'n.  
To open now her long-hid roll she tries,  
Where vary'd forms of pictur'd passions rise.  
Revenge and pride their furies first unfold,  
By artless virtue fatally controll'd.  
Scenes, wrought with gentler pencils, then succeed,  
Where love persuades a faithful wife to bleed ;  
Where, join'd to public cares, domestic woe  
Is seen from manly fortitude to flow.  
But if her colours mock the candid eye  
By spurious tincts, unmix'd with nature's dye,  
Ye friendly hands, restrain your fruitless aid,  
And with just censure let her labours fade.*

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**Dramatis Personæ.**

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***DRURY - LANE.***

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*Men.*

DUMNORIX	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Mr. Garrick.
TENANTIUS	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Mr. Burton.
EERANCUS	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Mr. Mozeem.
FLAMINIUS	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Mr. Havard.
ÆNOBARBUS	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Mr. Mossop.

*Women.*

BOADICEA	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Mrs. Pritchard.
VENUSIA	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Mrs. Cibber.

*Roman Ambassador, Icenians, and Trinobantians.*

*SCENE, the British Camp before the Tent of Dumnorix.*

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## BOADICEA.

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### ACT I. SCENE I.

BOADICEA, DUMNORIX, *Icenians, Trinobantians, and*  
*Roman Ambassador.*

*Roman Ambassador.*

SUTONIUS, leader of the Roman arms,  
With gentlest greetings to th' Icenian queen,  
And Dumnorix, the Trinobantian chief,  
Sends health, and proffers friendship. Let the wrongs,  
The mutual wrongs sustain'd by Rome and Britain—

*Boad.* May stern Andate, war's victorious goddess,  
Again resign me to your impious rage,  
If e'er I blot my suff'rings from remembrance;  
If e'er relenting mercy cool my vengeance,  
Till I have driv'n you to our utmost shores,  
And cast your legions on the crimson'd beach.  
Your costly dwellings shall be sunk in ashes,  
Your fields be ravag'd, your aspiring bulwarks

O'erturn'd and levell'd to the meanest shrub ;  
Your gasping matrons, and your children's blood,  
With mingled streams, shall dye the British sword ;  
Your captive warriors, victims at our altars,  
Shall croud each temple's spacious round with death :  
Else may each pow'r, to whom the Druids bend,  
Annul my hopes of conquest and revenge !

*Dum.* [*To the Ambassador.*] You come to offer terms.

Stand forth and answer.

Did not Prasutagus, her dying lord,  
On your insatiate emperor bestow  
Half of his rich possessions, vainly deeming  
The rest might pass unpillag'd to his children ?  
What did ye then, ye savage sons of rapine ?  
You seiz'd the whole inheritance by force,  
Laid waste our cities ; with the servile scourge  
Disgrac'd a royal matron ; you deflow'r'd  
Her spotless daughters, stole our noblest youth  
To serve your pride and luxury in Rome ;  
Our priests you butcher'd, and our hoary elders ;  
Profan'd our altars, our religious groves,  
And the base image of your Cæsar thrust  
Among the gods of Britain ; and, by heav'n !  
Do you repair to these victorious tents  
With proffer'd peace and friendship ?

*Rom. Am.* Yes, to treat,

As faith, benevolence, and justice dictate.

*Dum.* How shall we treat with those, whose impious  
hands

Have rent the sacred bands of mutual trust ?

How shall we treat with those, whose stony hearts  
Compassion cannot melt, nor shame control,  
Nor justice awe, nor piety restrain,  
Nor kindness win, nor gratitude can bind ?

*Rom. Am.* Thou art a stranger to our gen'ral's virtues.

No pillager, like Catus, but a soldier,  
To calm and sober discipline inur'd,  
He would redress, not widen your complaints.

*Dum.* Can he restore the violated maid  
To her untainted purity and fame ?  
Can he persuade inexorable death  
To yield our slaughter'd elders from the grave ?  
No, nor by soothing tales elude our vengeance.

*Rom. Am.* Yet hear us calmly, ere from yonder hills  
You call the legions of imperial Rome,  
And wake her eagles, which would sleep in peace.

*Boad.* Begone, and bear defiance to your legions.  
Tell them, I come, that Boadicea comes,  
Fierce with her wrongs, and terrible in vengeance,  
To roll her chariot o'er their firmest ranks,  
To mix their soaring eagles with the dust,  
And spurn their pride beneath her horses' hoofs.

*Rom. Am.* Then be prepar'd for war.

*Boad.* We are prepar'd.

Come from your hills, ye fugitive remains  
Of shatter'd cohorts, by their fear preserv'd.  
Th' embattled nations of our peopled isle,  
Yet fresh from seventy thousand slaughter'd Romans,  
Shall add yon refuse to the purple heap.

And yet amid triumphant desolation,  
Though flames each Roman colony devour,  
Though each distracted matron view her infant  
Grasp with its tender hands the piercing spear,  
Though your grey fathers to the falchion's edge  
Each feeble head surrender, my revenge  
Will pine unsated, and my greatness want  
Redress proportion'd to a queen's disgrace.

*Dum.* Go, and report this answer to Suetonius :  
Too long have parents' sighs, the cries of orphans,  
And tears of widows, signaliz'd your sway,  
Since your ambitious Julius first advanc'd  
His murd'rous standard on our peaceful shores.  
At length, unfetter'd from his patient sloth,  
The British genius lifts his pond'rous hands,  
To hurl with ruin his collected wrath,  
For all the wrongs a century hath borne,  
In one black period, on the Roman race.

*Rom. Am.* Yet ere we part, your price of ransom  
name

For the two captive Romans.

*Boad.* Not the wealth  
Which loads the palaces of sumptuous Rome  
Shall bribe my fury. Hence, and tell your legions,  
The hungry ravens, which inhabit round  
The chalky cliffs of Albion, shall assemble  
To feast upon the limbs of these your captains,  
Shall riot in the gore of Roman chiefs,  
These masters of the world. Produce the pris'ners.  
[To an Icenian.



*Enter ÆNOBARBUS and FLAMINIUS, in Chains.*

*Boad.* Stay, if thou wilt, and see our victims fall.

*[To the Ambassador.]*

*Ænob.* *[To Boad.]* Dart not on me thy fiery eyes,  
barbarian!

Vain are thy efforts to dismay a Roman.

Life is become unworthy of my care;

And these vile limbs, by galling chains dishonour'd,

I give most freely to the wolves and thee.

*Rom. Am.* Mistaken queen! the Romans do not  
want

These instigations, nor thy proud defiance

To meet your numbers in the vale below.

*Ænob.* *[To the Ambas.]* Then wherefore dost thou  
linger here in vain?

Commend us to Suetonius; bid him straight

Arrange his conquering legions in the field,

There teach these rash barbarians to repent

Of their disdain, and wish for peace too late.

*Rom. Am.* *[To the prisoners.]* Yes, to Suetonius and  
the Roman camp

These heavy commendations will we bear:

That, for two gallant countrymen, our love

And indignation at their fate may sharpen

Each weapon's point, and strengthen ev'ry nerve,

Till humbled Britain have appeas'd their shades.

*[Exit.]*

*Ænob.* Come, let us know our fate.

*Boad.* Prepare for death.

*Ænob.* Then cease to loiter, savage.

*Dum.* [*To Ænob.*] Now, by Heaven,  
Wert thou no Roman, I could save and love thee.  
That dauntless spirit in another breast,  
And in a blameless cause, were truly noble,  
But shews in thee the murderer and ruffian.

*Ænob.* Thy hate or favour are alike to me.

*Flam.* [*To Dum.*] May I demand, illustrious Tri-  
nobantian,

Why must we fall, because uncertain war  
Hath made us captives?

*Dum.* If in open battle,  
With gen'rous valour to have fac'd our arms,  
Were all our charge against thee, thou might'st rest  
Secure of life; but leading thee to die  
Is execution on a gen'ral robber.

*Ænob.* [*To Flam.*] And dost thou meanly sue to  
these barbarians?

*Flam.* [*To Dum.*] Though our rapacious country-  
men have drawn  
Your just resentment, we are guiltless both.

*Boad.* [*To Flam.*] So are ten thousand infants,  
whom the name,  
The single name of Roman shall condemn,  
Like thee, to perish by th' unsparing sword.

*Flam.* Yet more than guiltless, we may plead desert  
With Boadicea.

*Boad.* Insolent pretension!  
A Roman plead desert with Boadicea!  
This shall enlarge the portion of thy suff'rings;

For this not only shall thy blood embrue  
Andate's shrine, but torture shall be added,  
And fury wanton in thy various pains.

*Ænob.* [*To Boad.*] Produce thy tortures ; them and  
thee we scorn.

*Ten.* Fall back with rev'rence, Trinobantian soldiers,  
See who advances from your gen'ral's tent.

*Enter VENUSIA.*

*Ven.* Victorious sister, may th' unresting labour  
Of fortune weave new honours to adorn thee,  
And Dumnorix, thy colleague, and my lord.  
But if, amid these warlike consultations,  
Ere yet the order'd pomp of battle moves,  
A supplicating sound may reach thy ear,  
Stoop from thy glory to an act of mercy.  
Thy doom pronounc'd on these unhappy captives——

*Boad.* Ha!

*Ven.* Their deservings, and thy daughter's pray'r,  
Mix'd with my own compassion, from the tent  
Have call'd me forth a suitor to thy pity,  
That thou wouldst hear and spare them.

*Boad.* Spare these captives!

*Dum.* Why this request, Venusia?

*Ven.* Give them hearing:  
They can unfold a story which demands  
Your whole attention.

*Dum.* Let us hear. Proceed. [*To Flam.*]

*Flam.* The Romans' late injustice we abhorr'd,  
Nor join'd the band of spoilers. In that season

We chanc'd one day to wander through the forest  
Which parts our confines from th' Icenian land.  
We found a beauteous virgin in our way.

*Boad.* Wretch ! dost thou hope to barter with our  
sister

For thy base life ?

*Flam.* I fear not death, Oh, Queen !  
But dread dishonour ev'n among my foes.

*Ænob.* Death is thy terror ; reason else would teach  
thee,

No gratitude with cruelty can dwell.

*Flam.* Deep in that wood we met the lovely maid,  
Chas'd by a brutal soldier. At our threats  
He soon retreated. To our home we led her,  
From insult guarded, sent her back with honour :  
Nor was she less than Boadicea's daughter.

*Ven.* Now, dearest sister, whose successful standard  
Not valour more than equity upholds ;  
And thou, my husband, who dost rise in arms,  
Oppressive deeds in others to chastise,  
From your own guiding justice will you stray,  
And blend deservers with the herd of guilt ?

*Dum.* And are you Romans ? Yes, we will, Venusia,  
Repay their worthy deed. Strike off their fetters.

*Boad.* What do I hear ! A British chief's command !  
Whoe'er unchains a Roman, on mankind  
Lets loose oppression, insolence and rapine,  
Sets treason, falsehood, vice, and murder free.

*Ven.* Yet these preserv'd thy Emmeline from shame.

*Boad.* Not less the victim of eternal shame

Was she conducted to their hateful mansion.  
 To guard her honour, and be less than ruffians,  
 Had been repugnant to their name and race ;  
 But fear of me compell'd them to release her.  
 Then shall two Romans, nurs'd in fraud and falsehood,  
 From childhood train'd to each flagitious deed,  
 By colour'd pleas to shun the fate they merit,  
 Here find regard against the thousand mouths  
 Of Boadicea's sufferings ? No, this moment  
 Shall they expire in torture.

*Ven.* Yet reflect ;

Of all the paths which lead to human bliss,  
 The most secure and grateful to our steps  
 With mercy and humanity is mark'd.  
 The sweet-tongu'd rumour of a gracious deed  
 Can charm from hostile hands th' uplifted blade,  
 The gall of anger into milk transform,  
 And dress the brows of enmity in smiles.

*Boad.* Still dost thou dare, Venusia——

*Dum.* Gently, sister :

And, trust me these resemble virtuous men.

*Boad.* Was I not virtuous, whom the Romans lash'd ?  
 Were not my violated children virtuous ?  
 Bear them this instant to the fiercest rack ;  
 And, while their trembling limbs are strain'd with  
     torture,

While, through the cruel agony of pain,  
 The bloody drops bedew their shiv'ring cheeks,  
 Tell them how gentle are the pangs they feel,  
 To those the soul of Boadicea prov'd,

When Roman rage her naked limbs expos'd,  
And mark'd her flesh with ever-during shame.

*Dum.* [*To the Britons.*] Withhold your hand.

*Boad.* What means the Trinobantian?

*Dum.* To save thy benefactors, and proclaim,  
Whate'er by valour we extort from fortune,  
We yet deserve by justice.

"*Boad.* To contend

" With Boadicea, and protect her foes,

" Did she awaken thy ignoble sloth,

" Which else without resentment of thy wrongs

" Had slept obscure at home?

"*Dum.* Forbear; be calm.

"*Boad.* Yes, under bondage thou hadst tamely  
bow'd,

" Had not I fir'd thy slow, inactive soul.

"*Dum.* Not with unbridled passion, I confess,

" I wield the sword and mount the warlike car.

" With careful eyes I view'd our suff'ring isle,

" And meditated calmly to avenge her.

" Unmov'd by rage, my soul maintains her purpose

" Through one unalter'd course; and oft before

" As I have guided thy unruly spirit,

" Against its wildness will I now protect thee,

" And from a base, inhuman action save thee."

*Boad.* Thy boasted calmness is the child of fear;  
Thou tremblest to exasperate the foe.  
Well was it, Britons, in our former conquests,  
That I presid'd o'er the scene of slaughter;  
Else had those thousands of the Roman youth,

Whose bodies lie extended on our fields,  
 Stood at this hour a threat'ning host against you.  
 Come, then, ye warriors, follow your conductress,  
 And drag these slaves to death.

*Dum.* They will not move,  
 Fix'd with amazement at thy matchless frenzy.  
 Do thou revere these warriors, who with scorn  
 Observe thy folly.

*Ven.* Husband, sister, hear !  
 Oh, if my humbled voice, my prostrate limbs,  
 If tears and sighs of anguish, may atone  
 For this pernicious discord I have rais'd——

*Boad.* [*To Ven.*] Hence with thy despicable sighs  
 and tears. [*To Dum.*]

And thou, presumptuous, what invidious power,  
 Foe to thy safety, animates thy pride  
 Still to contend with Boadicea's wrath ?

*Dum.* No, by Andate, I contend not with thee.  
 At this important season, when the soldier  
 Thirsts for the conflict, it would ill become me  
 To trifle here in discord with a woman.  
 Nay, do not swell that haughty breast in vain :  
 When once the sacred evidence of justice  
 Illuminates my bosom, on a rock,  
 Which neither tears can soften, nor the gusts  
 Of passion move, my resolution stands.

*Boad.* Now Heav'n fulfil my curses on thy head !  
 May ev'ry purpose of thy soul be frustrate,  
 May infamy and ruin overtake thee,  
 May base captivity and chains o'erwhelm thee,

May shameful crimson from thy shoulders start,  
 Like mine, dishonour'd with a servile scourge!  
 With pain all shiv'ring, and thy flesh contracting,  
 Low may'st thou crouch beneath th' expected stroke,  
 Ev'n from the hands thou sav'st!

*Tenan.* Alas, great Princess!

Divert this wrath against th' impending foe,  
 Whose formidable ranks will soon descend  
 From yonder hill.

*Boad.* [*To the Britons.*] Ungrateful and perfidious!  
 Now would I draw my spirit from your camp,  
 Leave you with him defenceless and expos'd;  
 Then should your shatter'd chariots be o'erthrown,  
 Your jav'lins broken, and in hasty flight  
 Far from your trembling hands the buckler cast,  
 Did not th' insatiate thirst which burns my soul  
 To empty ev'ry vein of Roman blood  
 Protect you, traitors, from my indignation.  
 But, by th' ensanguin'd altars of Andate,  
 Thou, Dumnorix, be sure, shalt rue this day;  
 For thou henceforward, art to me a Roman. [*Exit.*]

*Ven.* Oh, Dumnorix!

*Dum.* Let not this frantic woman  
 Grieve thy mild nature—Romans, cease to fear.  
 These are my tents; retire in safety thither.

[*Exeunt Flam. and Ænob.*]

Do thou go forth this instant and command

[*To Tenan.*]

Each ardent youth to gird his falchion round him,  
 His pond'rous spear to loosen from the turf,



And brace the target firmly on his arm.  
 His car let ev'ry charioteer prepare,  
 His warlike seat each combatant assume,  
 That ev'ry banner may in battle wave,  
 Ere the sun reaches his meridian height. [*Ex. Tenan.*]

*Ven.* My lord and husband !

*Dum.* Wherefore dost thou hold me,  
 And in my passage thy endearments plant ?  
 I must prepare this moment to confront  
 The foul and ghastly face of cruel war :  
 And, by the gods, I rather court at present  
 That shape of horror, than thy beauteous form.  
 Then go, thou dear intruder, and remove  
 Thy softness from me.

*Ven.* I will stay no longer  
 Than brave Tenantius hath perform'd thy orders.  
 Long have I known thy valour skill'd to throw  
 The rapid dart, and lift th' unconquer'd shield.  
 A confidence, like this, hath still diffus'd  
 Enough of firmness through my woman's heart,  
 Ne'er to molest thee with a woman's fears,  
 This day excepted ; now my weakness governs,  
 And terror, too importunate, will speak.  
 Hast thou encounter'd yet such mighty powers  
 As down that mountain suddenly will rush ?  
 From ev'ry part the Romans are assembled,  
 All vers'd in arms, and terrible in valour.

*Dum.* Tell me, thou lovely coward, am not I  
 As terrible ; or falls the Roman sword  
 On the tough buckler, and the crested helm,

With deadlier weight than mine? Away, and fear  
not;

Secure and calm, repose thee in thy tent;  
Think on thy husband, and believe he conquers:  
Amid the rage of battle he will think  
On thee; for thee he draws the martial blade,  
For thy lov'd infants gripes the pointed ash.  
Go, and expect me to return victorious;  
Thy hand shall dress my wounds, and all be well.

*Ven.* Far better be our fortune, than for thee  
To want that office from my faithful hand,  
Or me to stain thy triumphs with my tears.

*Dum.* Fear not. I tell thee, when thou seest my  
limbs

With dust bespread, my brows with glorious sweat,  
And some distinguish'd wound to grace my breast,  
Thou, in the fulness of thy love, shalt view me,  
And swear, I seem most comely in thy sight.  
Thy virtue then shall shew me worthier of thee,  
Than did thy fondness on our nuptial day.

*Ven.* It shall be so. All wounded thou shalt find  
My heart prepar'd to stifle its regret,  
And smooth my forehead with obedient calmness.  
Yet hear me further; something will I offer  
More than the weak effects of female dread;  
Thou go'st to fight in discord with thy colleague:  
It is a thought which multiplies my fears.

*Dum.* Well urg'd, thou dearest counsellor, who best  
Canst heal this mischief. Let thy meekness try  
The soft persuasion of a private conf'rence,

To win from error a bewilder'd sister,  
While none are present to alarm her pride.

*Ven.* I go, but, trembling, doubt my vain attempt;  
Unless, commission'd with thy dear injunctions,  
My soul, exerted to perform thy pleasure,  
Could give persuasion all my force of duty. [*Exit.*

*Dum.* Hark! we are summon'd.

*Enter TENANTIUS*

*Tenan.* Ev'ry band is form'd:  
The Romans too in close arrangement stand.

*Dum.* Ye warriors, destin'd to begin the onset,  
My Trinobantians, it is time to seek  
Th' embattled foe. And you, all-judging gods!  
Look down benignant on a righteous cause.  
Indeed we cannot give you, like the Romans,  
A proud and sumptuous offering: we abound not  
In marble temples, or in splendid altars:  
Yet though we want this vain, luxurious pomp,  
Rough though we wander on the mountain's head,  
Through the deep vale, and o'er the craggy rock,  
We still demand your favour; we can shew  
Hands which for justice draw th' avenging steel,  
Firm hearts, and manners undebas'd by fraud.  
To you, my dauntless friends, what need of words?  
Your cities have been sack'd, your children slain,  
Your wives dishonour'd—Lo! on yonder hills  
You see the spoilers; there the ruffians stand.  
Your hands are arm'd; then follow, and revenge.

[*Excunt.*

ACT II. SCENE I.

*Enter FLAMINIUS and ÆNOBARBUS.*

*Flaminius.*

Ho ! Ænobarbus, thou may'st now come forward.  
What has thy angry soul been brooding o'er ?

*Ænob.* Well thou hast sued, and hast obtain'd thy  
suit ;

Of these barbarians meanly hast implor'd  
Thy wretched life, and hast it. Must I thank thee  
For this uncommon privilege to stand  
A tame spectator of the Roman shame,  
To see exulting savages o'erturn  
Our walls and ramparts, see them with the spoils  
Of our waste dwellings, with our captive eagles  
And ancient trophies, ravish'd from our temples,  
March in rude triumph o'er the gods of Rome ?

*Flam.* What, thou hadst rather die !

*Ænob.* And thou hadst rather  
Live, like a dog, in chains, than die with courage,  
Thou most unworthy of the Roman name.

*Flam.* Did those, who now inhabit Rome, deserve  
The name of Romans, did the ancient spirit  
Of our forefathers still survive among us,  
I should applaud this bold contempt of life.  
Our ancestors, who liv'd while Rome was free,  
Might well prefer a noble fate to chains ;  
They lost a blessing we have never known :

Born and inur'd to servitude at home,  
We only change one master for another,  
And Durnnorix is far beyond a Nero.

*Ænob.* Mean'st thou to mock me?

*Flam.* No, I mean to shew  
Thy stern opinions suit not with the times.

*Ænob.* Still by our valour we control the world,  
And in that duty will I match the foremost.  
If our forefathers' manners be neglected,  
Free from that blame, I singly will maintain them.  
My sentiments are moulded by my spirit,  
Which wants thy pliant qualities to yield  
With ev'ry gust of fortune, rude or mild,  
And crouch beneath example, base or worthy.

*Flam.* Well, if thou canst not brook a British  
master——

*Ænob.* No, nor thy wanton folly will I brook,  
Which sports alike with slavery or freedom,  
Insensible of shame.

*Flam.* Suppose I free thee.

*Ænob.* Free me!

*Flam.* This day, if fortune be propitious.

*Ænob.* Ha! do not cheat me with delusive fables,  
And trifle with my bonds.

*Flam.* By all my hopes,  
I do not trifle.

*Ænob.* Wilt thou give my bosom  
Once more to buckle on the soldier's harness,  
And meet in battle our insulting foes?

Shall my keen falchion gore the flying rout,  
And raise a bleeding trophy to revenge,  
For each indignity which Rome hath borne ?  
Hold me no longer in suspense ; instruct me  
From whence these hopes proceed.

*Flam.* Thou know'st I lov'd  
The British princess.

*Ænob.* Hast thou rais'd my hopes  
To freedom, future victory, and honour,  
And dost thou talk of love ?

*Flam.* That love shall save us.  
Thou saw'st the gentle Emmeline but now  
Stole to our tent, and gave the tend'rest welcome.  
Unchang'd I found her, soft and artless still.  
The gen'rous maid already hath suggested  
The means of flight. The battle once begun,  
While ev'ry Briton is intent on war,  
Herself will guide us to a place of safety.

*Ænob.* Now I commend thee.

*Flam.* Thou approv'st then.

*Ænob.* Ay.

*Flam.* And see, the joyful moment is approaching ;  
See, where th' unnumber'd Trinobantians spread  
In rude disorder o'er the vale beneath,  
Whose broad extent this eminence commands.  
Mark their wide-waving multitude, confus'd  
With mingling standards, and tumultuous cars :  
But far superior to the rest behold,  
The brave and gen'rous Dumnorix, erect  
With eager hope, his lofty jav'lin shakes,

And with unpolish'd majesty adorns  
The front of war.

*Ænob.* I mark the rabble well ;  
And soon shall view the Romans from their station  
Between those woods, which shade the adverse hills,  
Sweep with resistless ardour to the vale,  
And trample o'er the savages like dust. [*A march.*

" *Flam.* That smiling vale with pity I contemplate,  
" And wish more gentle footsteps might be seen  
" To press its verdure, and that softer notes,  
" Than war's terrific clamours, might be tun'd  
" From those surrounding shades, to join the murmurs  
" Of that fair channel, whose sonorous bed  
" Receives the stream, descending from this grove  
" To form the limpid maze, which shines below.

" *Ænob.* I see it glist'ning in the noon-day sun.  
" But British gore will change its glassy hue.

" *Flam.* Oh! might we rather on its friendly banks  
" Erect a grateful monument to Peace ;  
" That she, her sway resuming, might afford me  
" To clasp the gallant Dumnorix, and style him  
" My friend, my benefactor, and preserver.—"  
Stand from before this tempest, while it passes.

*Enter BOADICEA and Icenians.*

*Boad.* Oh! I could drive this jav'lin through my  
heart  
To ease its tortures. Disobey'd! Control'd!  
Ev'n in my army's sight! Malignant pow'rs,  
If such there be, who o'er revenge preside,

Who steel the breast with ever-during hate,  
And aid black rancour in its purpos'd mischief,  
Be present now, and guide my indignation ! [*Pauses.*  
The Trinobantians are advanc'd before me.  
Let them sustain the onset ; let the Romans  
On Dumnorix with ev'ry cohort press,  
Till he intreat for Boadicea's aid,  
Then shall my eager eyes enjoy his ruin ;  
And when th' insulting boaster is o'erthrown,  
His bands dispers'd, or gasping in the dust,  
Then will I rush exulting in my car,  
Like fierce Andate, on the weary'd foe  
Lead rout and slaughter, through a tide of gore  
Impel my clotted wheels, redeem the day,  
And, from the mouth of danger snatching conquest,  
Crown my revenge with glory.

*Enter VENUSIA.*

*Ven.* Stand apart,  
At my request, Icenians. O, unbend [*To Boad.*  
That louring brow, and hear a suppliant sister !  
So prone to error is our mortal frame,  
Time could not step without a trace of horror,  
If wary nature on the human heart,  
Amid its wild variety of passions,  
Had not impress'd a soft and yielding sense,  
That, when offences give resentment birth,  
The kindly dews of penitence may raise  
The seeds of mutual mercy and forgiveness.



*Boad.* Weak wretch, and yet whose impotence aspires

To mix in warlike councils, and determine  
The fate of captives, won in fields of death.  
Thou wouldst do better to reserve thy tears;  
Thou shalt have cause for penitential torrents.

*Ven.* They will not wait a second birth of woe;  
At thy severity they burst already.

“ Why turns on me that formidable aspect,  
“ Wont with commanding sternness to behold  
“ Its foes abash’d, and victory its vassal?  
“ Yet how much brighter is the wreath of glory,  
“ When interwove with clemency and justice?  
“ Thou go’st to battle, there obtain renown;  
“ But learn compassion from my tears, nor think  
“ Benignity enfeebles, or dishonours  
“ The most exalted valour.

“ *Boad.* Shall the tears

“ Of abject importunity detain me,  
“ While vengeance, striding from his grisly den,  
“ With fell impatience grinds his iron teeth,  
“ And waits my nod to satisfy his hunger?  
“ Hence to th’ employment of thy feeble distaff!  
“ *Ven.* Not skill’d, like thee, in war’s ennobling  
toils,

“ Inferior praise, and humbler tasks I court,  
“ And own my safety in thy loftier virtues;  
“ Yet not like thee, with unforgiving wrath,  
“ Could I resign a sister to her grief  
“ At this tremendous hour, so near deciding

" The fate of both. One gentle word bestow,  
 " And I will leave thee with obedient haste;  
 " Nay, I will seek the altars, and request,  
 " That in the future triumphs of this day,  
 " Heav'n may refuse to Dumnorix a share,  
 " And give thee all."

*Boad.* Does Dumnorix consent

To sacrifice the Romans? Art thou mute?  
 Still does he brave me? But your favour'd captives  
 Shall not escape. They soon shall join the victims,  
 Which this unconquer'd jav'lin shall reserve  
 To solemnize the fall of Rome's dominion.  
 Then to my glory Dumnorix shall bend.  
 In sight of Britain shall his baffled pride  
 The pomp of public sacrifice behold,  
 Behold and pine. You take a band of soldiers,

[*To an Icenian.*

Watch well around the Trinobantian tents,  
 And guard these Romans, as your lives. I tell thee,  
 [To Ven.

Their gore shall yet besmear Andate's altar.

*Ven.* In silent awe I heard thy first resentment,  
 Yet hop'd, the well-known accents of affection,  
 In kindness whisper'd to thy secret ear,  
 Might to thy breast recall its exil'd pity,  
 That gentle inmate of a woman's heart.

*Boad.* Durst thou, presumptuous, entertain a thought

To give this bosom, nerv'd with manly strength,  
 The weak sensations of a female spirit.

*Ven.* When I remind thy elevated soul,  
That we by mutual int'rest are but one,  
And by th' indissoluble ties of birth;  
Are those sensations weak, which nature prompts?  
With justice strengthen'd, can her pow'rful voice  
Find no persuasion? —

*Boad.* None. Provoke no more  
With plaintive murmurs my indignant ear.  
Thou, and thy husband, authors of my shame,  
Before th' assembled chiefs, may rest assur'd,  
No pray'rs shall soften, no atonement bribe,  
And no submission shall appease the wrong.  
May desolation trample on my dwelling  
A second time, rapacious force again,  
And insult revel through my inmost chambers,  
If I forgive you. Thou hast food for anguish;  
Go, and indulge its appetite at leisure.

*Ven.* Yes, I will hasten to the holy shrine,  
There wring my hands, and melt in copious sorrow,  
Not for my injur'd self, but thee remorseless,  
To mourn thy faded honours, which, deform'd  
By harsh injustice to thy blameless friends,  
Ne'er will revive in beauty. Not success,  
Not trophies rising round thee, not the throng  
Of circling captives, and their conquer'd standards,  
Nor glorious dust of victory, can hide  
From just reproach thy unrelenting scorn,  
While none deplore thee, but the wrong'd Venusia.

[Exit.

*Boad.* Stern pow'r of war, my patroness and guide,

To thee each captive Roman I devote.  
 Come then, vindictive goddess, in thy terrors ;  
 O'erwhelm with wrath his sacrilegious head,  
 Who would defraud thy altars : O confound  
 His ranks, his steeds, his chariots, and thy favour  
 To me, thy martial votaress, confine,  
 In sex like thee, and glowing with thy fires.

[*Exeunt all but Ænobarbus and Flaminius.*]

*Æno.* Do thou come forward now, and say, what  
 terrors

Has thy dejected soul been brooding o'er ?  
 Yon furious dame, who fill'd thee so with dread,  
 Is marching onward. Raise thy head, and look ;  
 See, where ev'n now with sullen pride she mounts  
 Her martial seat ; yet wondrous slow, by Heav'n,  
 Her car descends, nor soon will reach the vale.  
 Thou look'st desponding. Art thou still dismay'd ?  
 Think'st thou yon dreadful woman will return ?  
 From us she moves, though slowly ; then take com-  
 fort.

*Flam.* Far other care, than terrors, fill my breast.

*Ænob.* What means this languor ? Wherefore heaves  
 that sigh ?

*Flam.* O Ænobarbus, wilt thou bear my weakness ;  
 I see the moment of deliv'rance near,  
 Yet pine with grief.

*Ænob.* Whate'er the folly be,  
 With which thy bosom teems, the gods confound it.

*Flam.* To see the dearest object of my soul,  
 Just see her after such a tedious absence,

Then vanish from her sight perhaps for ever;  
When these reflections rise, the sweet exchange  
From bonds to freedom, which to her I owe,  
Is mix'd with bitterness, and joy subsides.

*Ænob.* Why didst thou leave the fair Italian fields,  
Thou silken slave of Venus? What could move  
Thee to explore these boist'rous northern climes,  
And change yon radiant sky for Britain's clouds?  
What dost thou here, effeminate? By Heav'n,  
Thou shouldst have loiter'd in Campania's villas,  
And in thy garden nurs'd, with careful hands,  
The gaudy-vested progeny of Flora;  
Or indolently pac'd the pebbled shore,  
And ey'd the beating of the Tuscan wave  
To waste thy irksome leisure. Wilt thou tell me,  
What thou dost here in Britain? Dost thou come  
To sigh and pine? Could Italy afford  
No food for these weak passions? Must thou traverse  
Such tracts of land, and visit this cold region  
To love and languish? Answer me, what motive  
First brought thee hither? But forbear to urge  
It was in quest of honour; for the god  
Of war disclaims thee.

*Flam.* Well, suppose I answer,  
That friendship drew me from the golden Tiber,  
With thee to combat this inclement sky,  
Will it offend thee?

*Ænob.* No, I am thy friend,  
And I will make a Roman of thee still;

But let me see no languishing dejection  
More on thy brow, nor hear unmanly sighs.  
Gods! canst thou dream of love, when yonder see,  
The Roman legions, all array'd for battle,  
Are now descending; see their dreaded eagles,  
Their dazzling helmets, and their crimson plumes :  
A grove of jav'lines glitters down the steep ;  
They point their terrors on th' astonish'd foe ;  
Soon will they charge the Britons in the vale,  
And with the auspicious glories of this day  
Enrich the annals of imperial Rome.  
O curst captivity! with double weight  
I feel thee now! malicious fate! to suffer  
A Roman thus to stand confin'd in bondage,  
And see the triumphs, which he cannot share.  
By Heav'n, Flaminius! I will never bear it.  
Where is thy Briton? Will she lead us hence?  
Else, by the god of war, unarm'd I rush  
To join the glorious scene, which opens there.

*Flam.* I see her coming, and will fly to meet her.

[*Exit.*

*Ænob.* Our time is short, remember, do not dally.

“ I have a thought, lies rip'ning in my breast,  
“ And teems with future glory; if the fight  
“ Prove undecisive, and these tents subsist,”  
Soon will I bid thee, hostile camp, farewell.  
Thou saw'st me come in thralldom; I depart  
A fugitive: if ever I return,  
Thou shalt receive me in another guise;

Then shalt thou feel me ; when my shining helm  
Shall strike cold terror through thy boldest guards,  
And from its lofty crest destruction shake. [*Exeunt.*]

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ACT III. SCENE I.

*Enter FLAMINIUS and ÆNOBARBUS.*

*Flaminius.*

OUR lovely guide attends us. Thy impatience  
Hath call'd me loit'rer.

*Ænob.* Thou may'st loiter still.

Thou canst not hasten, nor retard our fate,  
Which is irrevocably fix'd.

*Flam.* What say'st thou ?

*Ænob.* I say, prepare to die. If Boadicea  
Return once more, our destiny is fix'd.  
Whate'er her merciless revenge may purpose,  
Elate with conquest, or incens'd by loss,  
If on the rack to strain our bursting sinews,  
If from the bleeding trunks to lop our limbs,  
Or with slow fires protract the hours of pain,  
We must abide it all. Collect thy spirit,  
And, like a Roman, dauntless wait thy doom.

*Flam.* I hear thee, but thy meaning—

*Ænob.* Hear again :

Before the tent some paces as I stood,  
And joyful saw the Trinobantian guard,  
Of us neglectful, from this quarter drawn

To view the impending battle ; on a sudden  
A curs'd Icenian cast his jealous eye  
Athwart my steps, then call'd a num'rous band,  
Who prowl around us, as a destin'd prey.

*Flam.* Malicious fortune !

*Ænob.* Now thou seest my meaning.

*Flam.* Our flight were vain, while these observe us.

*Ænob.* True.

What has thy tame submission now avail'd,  
Thy abject supplication to barbarians ?  
Hadst thou with courage met thy fate at first,  
We had been dead, ere now.

*Flam.* To view the sun

Through his gay progress from the morn, till even,  
Possess my friends, my parents, and my love,  
Within the circle of my native walls,  
Were joys I deem'd well worthy of my care ;  
But since that care is fruitless, I can leave  
This light, my friends, my parents, love, and country,  
As little daunted at my fate as thou,  
Though not so unconcern'd.

*Ænob.* Oh, Mars and Vesta !

Is it a vision, which you raise before me  
To charm my eyes ? Behold a scene, Flaminius,  
To cheer a Roman in the gasp of death.  
The Britons are defeated ; look, Flaminius,  
Back from the vale in wild tumultuous flight  
Behold their numbers sweeping tow'rd the hill :  
Already some are swarming up its side  
To reach their camp for shelter ; pale dismay



With hostile rage pursues their broken rear,  
 While massacre, unchidden, cloy's his famine,  
 And quaffs the blood of nations. Oh, in vain  
 Dost thou oppose thy bosom to the tide  
 Of war, and brandish that recover'd standard ;  
 " Vain is thy animating voice to those,  
 " Whom fear makes deaf ;" Oh, Dumnorix, thy toils  
 Are fruitless, Britain in the scale of fate  
 Yields to the weight of Rome. Now, life, farewell :  
 " Shine on, bright Phœbus ; those who rest behind  
 " To share thy splendors, while I sink in darkness,  
 " Are far beneath my envy ;" I resign  
 These eyes with pleasure to eternal shades,  
 They now have seen enough.

*Flam.* Whence this despair ?  
 A blind confusion fills the spacious camp.  
 Already consternation hath dispers'd  
 Our guard. Ev'n Dumnorix retires—He comes ;  
 Avoid him—Trust me, I am well instructed,  
 And will conduct thee to a safe retreat. [*Exeunt.*

*Enter DUMNORIX with a standard.*

*Dum.* Thou hard-kept remnant of our shatter'd  
 fortune,  
 Stand there before the partial eye of Heav'n,  
 Which has preferr'd the Romans' splendid altars,  
 To the plain virtue of a British heart.  
 Presumptuous frenzy ! Why is Heav'n reproach'd ?  
 Oh, Boadicea, thou perfidious mischief !

*Enter VENUSIA.*

*Ven.* Now let my duty o'er my fear prevail,  
Fill my whole breast with tenderness, and heal  
With sweetest comfort thy distress.

*Dum.* My wife !  
Thou most unlike to yon degen'rate woman,  
Her country's bane !

*Ven.* I tremble at thy words.

*Dum.* Be not dismay'd ; the camp is still our own.  
Night is impending, and the Romans halt.

*Ven.* But what of Boadicea ?

*Dum.* Hear and mourn.  
The Trinobantians scarce had fill'd the vale,  
When from a narrow pass between the woods  
Forth burst the Romans, wedg'd in deep array.  
I found our struggle vain, and sent for aid  
To Boadicea ; she with scorn reply'd,  
I did not want th' assistance of a woman ;  
Nor left her station, till my broken ranks  
Were driv'n among th' Icenians ; in a moment  
All was confusion, slaughter, and defeat.

*Enter BOADICEA.*

*Dum.* Gods ! art thou safe ?

*Ven.* Oh ! most unhappy sister !  
When last we parted, cruel were thy words,  
A sure presage of endless grief to me ;  
Yet my desponding spirit ne'er forboded,

That thou couldst deviate from a prosp'rous course,  
When ev'ry gale conspir'd to swell thy glory.

*Boad.* Throw not on me the crime of envious fortune.

*Dum.* Dost thou blame fortune, traitress?

*Boad.* Then the blame  
Take on thy single head.

*Dum.* Avoid my sight.

*Boad.* Thou led'st the van.

*Dum.* Avaunt!

*Boad.* Thou fled'st the first.

Now find'st too late th' importance of a woman.

*Dum.* Too true I find a woman curs'd with pow'r  
To blast a nation's welfare. Heavenly rulers!  
How have the Britons merited this shame?  
Have we with fell ambition, like the Romans,  
Unpeopled realms, and made the world a desert?  
Have we your works defac'd; or how deserv'd  
So large a measure of your bitt'rest wrath,  
That you should clothe this spirit of a wolf  
In human form, and blend her lot with ours?

*Boad.* Beset with perils, as I am, pursu'd  
By rout and havoc to th' encircl'ing toil;  
Untam'd by this reverse, my lofty soul,  
Upbraiding still thy arrogance, demands,  
Who spar'd the captive Romans? Who provok'd  
My just resentment? Who, in pow'r, in name  
And dignity inferior, but elate  
With blind presumption, and by envy stung,

Dar'd to dispute with me supreme command,  
Then pale and trembling turn'd his back on danger?

*Ven.* Oh, once united by the friendliest ties,  
And leaders both of nations, shall this land  
Still view its bulwarks, tott'ring with disunion,  
Enhance the public and their own misfortunes?  
Thou, my complacent lord, wert wont to smooth  
That manly front at pity's just complaint;  
And thou, entrusted with a people's welfare,  
A queen and warrior, let disdain no more  
Live in the midst of danger—See Venusia  
Upon her knees——

*Dum.* Shall thy perfections kneel  
To this——

*Ven.* Oh! stop, nor give resentment utterance.  
In such a cause the proudest knee might sue  
To less than Boadicea——Turn not from me!

[To Boadicea.

Look on a prostrate sister; think, thou hear'st  
Our children's plaintive notes enforce my pray'r,  
And Albion's genius mix his solemn moan;  
That lamentations through thy ears resound  
From all the wives and mothers of those thousands,  
Whose limbs lie stretch'd on yonder fields of death;  
“Those wretched wives and mothers, oh! reflect,  
“But for the fatal discord of this day,  
“With other looks, with other cries and gestures,  
“With diff'rent transports, and with diff'rent tears,  
“Might have receiv'd their sons and husbands home,  
“Than they will now survey their pale remains,

"Which there lie mangled by the Roman sword"  
 To feed the raven's hunger—yet relent!  
 Yet let restoring union close our wounds,  
 And to repair this ruin be thy praise!

*Dum.* Rise, rise. Thy mildness, whose persuasive  
 charm

No cruelty, but hers, could hear unmov'd,  
 In vain would render placable and wise  
 That malice, inhumanity and frenzy,  
 Which have already wasted such a store  
 Of glory and success.

*Boad.* Oh!

*Dum.* Dost thou groan?

*Boad.* No, no, I do not feel a moment's pain.

*Dum.* Thy words are false. Thy heart o'erflows  
 with anguish.

*Boad.* No, I despise both thee and fortune still.

*Dum.* By Heav'n, I know distraction rends thy soul,  
 And to its view presents th' approaching scene  
 Of shame and torture, when th' indignant Romans  
 Exact a tenfold vengeance for their suff'rings;  
 And when thou passest through their streets in chains,  
 The just derision of insulting foes,  
 A frantic woman, who resign'd her hopes,  
 And to indulge an empty pride, betray'd  
 Her children, friends, and country; then recal,  
 What once was Boadicea, fall'n how low  
 From all her honours, by her folly fall'n  
 From pow'r, from empire, victory, and glory,  
 To vilest bonds, and ignominious stripes.



My pregnant soul ; the mighty plan is forming ;  
 It grows, it labours in my ardent bosom ;  
 It springs to life, and calls for instant action ;  
 Lead on, exert thee, goddess, till the furies,  
 Which heretofore have thunder'd at thy heels,  
 Start at the new-born horrors of this night. [*Exit.*

*Ven.* Oh ! Dumnorix, how virtue hath recoil'd  
 Upon itself ! my interposing pity,  
 Thy manly firmness in a gen'rous act  
 Gave these disasters being.

*Dum.* I forbid thee  
 To blame thy virtues, which the gods approve,  
 And I revere. Now leave me to concert  
 With our surviving chiefs the means of safety.

*Ven.* Oh ! that, like me, compliant, at thy word  
 Peace a benign companion would attend,  
 And moderate thy cares, while I depart.

*Dum.* Have I been guilty ? answer me, my heart,  
 Who now wouldst burst my agonizing breast,  
 Hath Dumnorix been guilty ? Wilt thou, Britain,  
 To me impute the horrors of this day ?  
 Perhaps a Roman's policy had yielded,  
 And to a colleague's cruelty and pride  
 Had sacrific'd humanity and justice ?  
 I did not so, and Albion is destroy'd.  
 Yet, oh, be witness, all ye gen'rous spirits,  
 So lately breathing in those heaps of death,  
 That in this day's extremity and peril,  
 Your Dumnorix was mindful of his charge ;  
 My shiver'd javelin, my divided shield,

And blunted sword, be witness for your master,  
You were not idle in that dreadful hour ;  
Nor ev'n amid the carnage pil'd around me,  
Will I relinquish my pursuit of hope——  
Hope may elude me——For myself I fear not——  
But my Venusia——Ha ! prepare, my soul——  
There is thy struggle, on her tender mind  
To graft thy firmness, which can welcome death,  
And hold it gain, when liberty is lost. [ *Exeunt.*

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*ACT IV. SCENE I.*

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*Enter Dumnorix.*

*Dumnorix.*

TELL good Tenantius and the rest return,  
I have been led by solitary care  
To yon dark branches, spreading o'er the brook,  
Which murmurs through the camp; this mighty  
camp,  
Where once two hundred thousand sons of war  
With restless dins awak'd the midnight hour.  
Now horrid stillness in the vacant tents  
Sits undisturb'd; and these incessant rills,  
Whose pebbled channel breaks their shallow stream,  
Fill with their melancholy sound my ears,  
As if I wander'd like a lonely hind,  
O'er some dead fallow far from all resort :



Unless that ever and anon a groan  
Bursts from a soldier, pillow'd on his shield  
In torment, or expiring with his wounds,  
And turns my fix'd attention into horror.  
Venusia comes——The hideous scene around me  
Now prompts the hard but necessary duty.——  
Yet how to name thee, death, without thy terrors !

*Enter VENUSIA.*

*Ven.* Thou didst enjoin my absence. I departed.  
With ill-tim'd care if now returning——

*Dum.* No.

*Ven.* Alas ! deep-plung'd in sadness still I find thee.

*Dum.* Dost thou ? Come nearer. Thou hast seen  
this day,

How thy perfidious, thy invet'rate sister  
Hath stain'd my glory, and my fortune baffled ;  
Thou hast receiv'd me vanquish'd, who before  
Was us'd to greet thee with the sound of conquest.  
Now tell me truly ; am I still the same  
In my Venusia's eyes ?

*Ven.* What means my lord ?

*Dum.* Am I still lov'd and honour'd, as before ?

*Ven.* Canst thou suspect that fortune rules my love ?  
Thy pow'r and honours may be snatch'd away,  
Thy wide possessions pass to other lords,  
And frowning heav'n resume whate'er it gave,  
All but my love, which ne'er shall know decay,  
But ev'n in ruin shall augment its fondness.

*Dum.* Then will my dictates be regarded still.

*Ven.* Impart this moment thy rever'd commands ;  
And if it prove within my slender pow'r  
To ease thy troubles, I will bless the gods,  
And, unrepining, to our fate submit.

*Dum.* Think not my own calamities distress me ;  
I can encounter fortune's utmost malice :  
But, Oh! for thee, Venusia——

*Ven.* Do not fear.  
While in these faithful arms I hold my lord,  
I never shall complain. Let ev'ry ill,  
Let ruin and captivity o'ertake me,  
With thee I will be happy.

*Dum.* Ha! Venusia!  
Could thou and I find happiness together,  
Depriv'd of freedom? Dost thou mark?

*Ven.* I do.

*Dum.* Thou art most fair ; but could thy lovely face  
Make slavery look comely? Could the touch  
Of that soft hand convey delight to mine  
With servile fetters on?

*Ven.* Why dost thou gaze  
Thus stedfastly upon me?

*Dum.* I would have thee  
Reflect once more upon the loss of freedom.

*Ven.* It is the heaviest sure of human woes.

*Dum.* "Learn one thing more, and, though re-  
lentless Heav'n  
"Its care withdraws from this ill destin'd isle,  
"Thou, in the fall of nations, shalt be safe."  
Oh! heed, Venusia! never did thy welfare

Raise in my breast such tender cares before ;  
 " Else from the public danger would I spare  
 " These precious moments to assist thy virtue."

*Ven.* Thou mak'st me all attention.

*Dum.* Reach thy hand.

Now, while I hold thee, do I bless Andate,  
 That this free hand, protected by my sword,  
 Hath not yet known the shameful doom of bondage.

*Ven.* Nor shall I know it ; thy unshaken valour  
 Will be my safeguard still.

*Dum.* If fate confounds

My utmost efforts, can I then protect thee ?

*Ven.* Why dost thou lead me to despair ? Why fill  
 My breast with terrors ? Never did I see thee,  
 Till this sad hour, thus hopeless and dejected.  
 Oh ! how shall I, a woman weak and fearful,  
 Sustain my portion of the gen'ral woe ;  
 If thou, in perils exercis'd and war,  
 Dost to ill fortune bow thy gallant spirit ?

*Dum.* Think not, *Venusia*, I abandon hope.  
 No, on the verge of ruin will I stand,  
 And, dauntless, combat with our evil fate ;  
 Nor till its rancour bear me to the bottom,  
 My soul shall ever entertain despair :  
 But as the wisest, and the best resolv'd,  
 Cannot control the doubtful chance of war,  
 I would prepare thee for the worst event.

*Ven.* Fly where thou wilt, my faithful steps shall  
 follow.

" I can pursue thy course with naked feet,

“ Though roaming o’er the rough and pointed crags,  
“ Or through the pathless tract of deepest woods ;  
“ By thy dear hand supported, would I pass  
“ Thro’ the cold snow, which hides the mountain’s  
    brow,  
“ And o’er the frozen surface of the vale.”

*Dum.* “ Thou best of women, I believe thou  
    wouldst,

“ Believe thy constant heart would teach those  
    limbs,

“ Thus soft and gentle, to support all hardship,  
“ And hold with me society in toil.”

But should we want the wretched pow’r to fly,  
What then ?

*Ven.* What then ?

*Dum.* The Romans may surround us.

*Ven.* How wouldst thou act in such a dreadful  
    season ?

*Dum.* Ne’er shall the hands of Dumnorix endure  
The shame of fetters ; ne’er shall Rome behold  
This breast, which honourable war hath seam’d,  
Pant with the load of bondage : gen’rous wounds,  
Ye deep engraven characters of glory,  
Ye faithful monitors of Albion’s cause,  
Oft, when your midnight anguish hath rebuk’d  
Oblivious slumber from my watchful pillow,  
And in her danger kept my virtue waking :  
You, when that office can avail no more,  
Will look more graceful on my death-cold bosom,  
Than to be shewn before the scoffing Romans,

Should they behold that Dumnorix in shackles,  
Whom once they dreaded in the field of war.

*Ven.* Assist me, Heav'n !

*Dum.* Speak out. I watch to hear thee.  
My pow'rs are all suspended with attention.

*Ven.* What shall I do ?

*Dum.* Explain thy thoughts.

*Ven.* I cannot.

*Dum.* Why canst thou not ? Remember who thou  
art,

And who thy husband is.

*Ven.* The first of men,  
Join'd to the least deserving of her sex.

*Dum.* View thy own heart ; be conscious of thy  
merit ;

And, in its strength confiding, be secure,  
That thou art worthy of the greatest man,  
And not unequal to the noblest task.

*Ven.* Oh, I will struggle to assert that claim !  
Yet, dearest lord, extend thy whole indulgence,  
Nor undeserving of thy love esteem me,  
While trembling thus.

*Dum.* I know thy native softness.  
Yet wherefore dost thou tremble ? Speak, my love.

*Ven.* Oh, I have not thy courage, not been us'd,  
Like thee, to meet the dreadful shape of death ;  
I never felt the anguish of a wound ;  
Thy arm hath still kept danger at a distance :  
If now it threatens, and my heart no more  
Must treat with safety, it is new to me.

*Dum.* It is, my love. My tenderness implies  
No expectation, that thy gentle mind  
Should be at once familiariz'd with fate.  
Not insurmountable I hold our danger.  
But to provide against delusive fortune,  
"That thou may'st bear, unterrify'd, the lot,  
"Which best shall suit thy dignity and name,"  
Demands thy care ; take counsel of thy virtue.

*Ven.* I will.

*Dum.* And arm thy breast with resolution.

*Ven.* Indeed I will, and ask the gracious gods  
To fill my heart with constancy and spirit,  
And shew me worthy of a man, like thee :  
"Perhaps their succour, thy rever'd injunction,  
"And high example, may control my terrors."  
But, Oh ! what pow'r shall sooth another care,  
Than life more precious, and a keener pang,  
Than death's severest agony, relieve ;  
The sad remembrance of my helpless infants,  
Our love's dear pledges, who before me rise  
In orphan woe, defenceless and forsaken,  
And all my borrow'd fortitude dissolve.

*Dum.* Thou perfect pattern of maternal fondness,  
And conjugal compliance, rest assur'd,  
That care was never absent from my soul.  
Confide in me ; thy children shall be safe.

*Ven.* How safe ?

*Dum.* Shall live in safety. Thou shalt know.  
Mean time retire. Our anxious chiefs, return'd,  
Wait my commands, and midnight is advancing.

[Exit Venusia.]

She goes——her love and duty will surmount  
This hideous task——Oh, morning bright in hope,  
Clos'd by a night of horror, which reduces  
This poor——dear woman, yet in blooming years,  
Bless'd in her husband, in her offspring bless'd,  
Perhaps to cut her stem of being short  
With her own tender hand——If ever tears  
Might sort with valour, nor debase a soldier,  
It would be now——Ha! whither do I plunge?

*Enter EBRANCUS, TENANTIUS, and Trinobantians.*

*Dum.* Well, my brave friends, what tidings?

*Ebran.* Through thy quarter  
With weary steps and mourning have we travers'd  
A silent desert of unpeopled tents,  
Quite to the distant station of th' Icenians.  
Their chiefs we found in council round their queen;  
The multitude was arming: twenty thousand  
Were yet remaining, and unhurt by war,  
Unlike our Trinobantians, who, unaided,  
The fatal onset bore. Those huge battalions,  
Which Rome so dreaded, are, alas! no more.

*Dum.* Be not dejected. Far the greater part  
Are fled for shelter to their native roofs,  
And will rejoin us, when with force repair'd  
We may dispute our island still with Rome.  
But have you gain'd access to Boadicea?

*Ebran.* We have.

*Dum.* What said she?

*Ebran.* She approv'd thy counsel.

E ij

*Dum.* You told her then my purpose to retreat  
Through yonder forest.

*Ebran.* To herself alone  
We told it.

*Dum.* I commend you. You have sav'd us  
A conference, both needless and unpleasing.

*Ebran.* She further bade us note, how all th' Ice-  
nians  
Were then in arms, and ready to advance.

*Dum.* Return, and tell her, (let thy phrase, Ebran-  
cus,  
Be soft and humble) ere two hours be wasted,  
We must begin our march. Do you explore

[*To the other Trinobantians.*

The secret passage, and with winged haste  
Bring back your tidings. Thou, Tenantius, wait.

[*Exeunt Ebrancus and Trinobantians.*

To thee my inmost bosom I must open,  
And to thy friendship trust my tend'rest cares.  
Thou must pursue thy journey, heed me well,  
Quite through the forest—Dost thou know the pass?

*Tenan.* Yes, where those gushing waters leave the  
grove

To seek the valley, deeper in the shade  
From the same fountain flows a smaller brook,  
Whose secret channel through the thicket winds,  
And will conduct me farther down the vale——

*Dum.* Which once attain'd, proceed and gain my  
dwelling.

Give me thy honest hand.—Come nearer, soldier,



Thy faithful bosom would I clasp to mine——  
 Perhaps thy general and thou may never  
 Embrace again.

*Tenan.* What means my fearless chief?  
 Why hast thou call'd this unaccustom'd moisture  
 Into thy soldier's eyes?

*Dum.* Thou dost not weep,  
 My gallant vet'ran—I have been to blame.  
 A tenderness resulting from a care,  
 Which struggles here, subdu'd me for a moment.  
 This shall be soon discharg'd, and all be well.  
 I have two boys——If after all my efforts,  
 (I speak not prompted by despair, but caution)  
 Rome should prevail against me, and our hopes  
 Abortive fall, thou take these helpless infants;  
 With thee transport them to our northern frontiers,  
 And hide them deep in Caledonian woods.  
 There, in their growing years, excite and cherish  
 The dear remembrance of their native fields;  
 That, to redeem them from th' Italian spoiler,  
 If e'er some kind occasion should invite,  
 Forth from their covert they may spring undaunted.  
 "Ne'er let the race of Dumnorix divert  
 "One thought from Albion to their own repose.  
 "Remind them often of their father's toils,  
 "Whom thou leav'st grappling to the last with fortune."

And if beneath this island's mould'ring state  
 I, to avoid disgraceful chains, must sink,  
 Fain would my spirit in the hope depart,

That on the ruins, which surround my fall,  
A new-born structure may hereafter stand,  
Rais'd by my virtue, living in my sons. [Exeunt.

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*ACT V. SCENE I.*

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*Enter VENUSIA.*

*Venusia.*

A Hollow sound of tumult strikes my ear;  
Perhaps the howl of some night-roaming wolves,  
Who, wak'd by hunger, from their gloomy haunts  
Are trooping forth to make their fell repast  
On my fresh-bleeding countrymen, whose limbs  
O'erspread the valley. Shall I mourn your fall,  
Lost friends, who, couch'd in death, forget your  
cares,

I, who may shortly join your ghastly band,  
Unless that forest yield its promis'd aid?  
O hope, sweet flatt'rer, whose delusive touch  
Sheds on afflicted minds the balm of comfort,  
Relieves the load of poverty, sustains  
The captive, bending with the weight of bonds,  
And smooths the pillow of disease and pain,  
Send back th' exploring messenger with joy,  
And let me hail thee from that friendly grove.

*Enter DUMNORIX.*

*Dum.* Why hast thou left thy couch?

*Ven.* I heard a sound,  
Like tumult at a distance.

*Dum.* So did I,  
As near the op'ning pass I stood; to watch  
Our messenger's return.

*Enter EBRANCUS.*

What means this haste?

Why look'st thou pale?

*Ebran.* With thy instructions charg'd,  
I sought th' Icenian quârter. All around  
Was solitude and silence. When I call'd,  
No voice reply'd. To Boadicea's tent  
With fearful haste I trod. Her daughters there  
I found in consternation. I enquir'd  
The cause: they answer'd only with their tears;  
Till from the princess Emmeline at last  
I learn'd, that all th' Icenians were that hour  
In silent march departed; but their course  
She could not tell me: that her furious mother  
Had with a fell, determin'd look enjoin'd them  
To wait her pleasure, which should soon be known;  
Mean time to rest immoveable and mute.

*Enter an Icenian carrying a Bowl.*

*Ven.* My Dumnorix, defend me.

*Dum.* Ha! what means

This wild demeanour—wilt thou speak, Icenian?—  
Fear not, my love; thy Dumnorix is near.  
What is that bowl, thou carry'st?

*Icen.* Honour'd chief,  
If ought appears disorder'd in my gesture,  
Which ill becomes the reverence I owe thee,  
Charge that demerit to my horrid errand,  
And not to me.

*Ven.* What will befall us now !

*Dum.* [To the *Icen.*] Wilt thou begin ?

*Icen.* I come from Boadicea.

*Dum.* Where is she ?

*Icen.* Far advanc'd o'er yonder vale.

*Dum.* With what intention ?

*Icen.* To assail the Romans.

*Dum.* Assail the Romans ?

*Icen.* To surprise their camp,  
At this dead hour, with unexpected slaughter.  
Before she march'd, to me this secret charge  
In words, like these, she gave.—Observe our course ;  
When I have pass'd the camp's extremest verge,  
Back to my daughters and Venusia speed :  
Tell them, I go our fortune to restore,  
If unsuccessful, never to return.  
Should that stern doom attend me, bid them take  
The last, best gift, which dying I can leave them ;  
That of my blood no part may prove dishonour'd.  
The Trinobantian, of his Roman friends  
So well deserving, may accept their grace.—  
This said, with wild emotion in her breast,  
Her visage black'ning with despair and horror,  
She straight committed to my trembling hands  
Two fatal bowls, which flow with poison'd stream :

I have accomplish'd half my horrid task  
With Boadicea's daughters.

*Dum.* Frantic woman!

"Who hopes with fury and despair to match

"The vigilance and conduct of Suetonius.

*Icen.* From this ill-fated hand receive the draught,

"Whose hue and odour warrant it the juice

"Of that benumbing plant the Druids gather;

"That plant, whose drowsy moisture lulls the sense,

"And with a silent influence expels

"The unresisting spirit from her seat."

*Dum.* Mistaken woman! did she deem Venusia  
Was unprovided of this friendly potion—  
Perform thy orders; bear it to my tent.—  
Thou may'st not want it yet—take comfort, love.

*Enter a second Icenian.*

*2d Icen.* Oh! Dumnorix!

*Dum.* Icenian, spare thy voice.

Thy flight, thy terror, and thy wounds interpret  
Too plainly.

*2d Icen.* We are vanquish'd.

*Dum.* I believe thee.

*2d Icen.* Oh! I have much to tell thee—but I faint.

*Dum.* [*To Ebrancus.*] Conduct him hence, and  
learn the whole event.

[*Exit Icenian with Ebrancus.*]

*Ven.* On you, celestial arbiters, we call.  
Now as we stand environ'd by distress,  
Now weigh our actions past, deform'd, or fair,

If e'er oppression hath defil'd his valour,  
In help and pity to the woes of others,  
Our hearts been scanty, and our hands reserv'd,  
Let our transgressions ratify our doom :  
Else with your justice let our merits plead,  
To hold its shield before us, and repel  
These undeserv'd misfortunes.

*Dum.* Heav'n may hear,  
And through that forest lead us still to safety.  
Ha! no; each pow'r against us is combin'd ;  
What but their anger, levell'd at our heads,  
Could bring Tenantius back, so strictly charg'd  
To seek our home—The intercepting foes  
Have seiz'd the secret pass.

*Ven.* Whose guardian care  
Now to the gloomy shelter of a desert,  
To solitary innocence and peace  
Will guide our friendless orphans ?

*Dum.* True, Venusia.  
Through ev'ry trial Heav'n is pleas'd to lead us,  
Droop not—one comfort never can forsake us.  
The mind, to virtue train'd, in ev'ry state  
Rejoicing, grieving, dying, must possess  
Th' exalted pleasure to exert that virtue.

*Enter TENANTIUS.*

*Ven.* Speak, speak, Tenantius.

*Tenan.* We pursu'd our course,  
But had not travell'd far, before we heard  
The sound of footsteps dashing thro' the brook,

Whose winding channel marks the secret way.  
Not long we stood in wonder, ere a troop  
Of Romans sally'd forth, and made us captives.

*Dum.* Why then, farewell to what was left of  
hope.

*Tenan.* Not so, my lord.

*Ven.* Speak. What resource is left?

*Tenan.* We were conducted to the Roman leaders;  
One fierce and haughty, gentler far the other,  
Who calm'd his stern companion, gave us comfort,  
Nam'd thee with rev'rence, then an earnest zeal  
Disclosing for thy safety, and requesting  
A short, but friendly conference between you,  
With courtesy dismiss'd us.

*Ven.* Is he near?

*Tenan.* Hard by he waits impatient for an answer,  
Just where the pass is open to the tent.

*Dum.* What would the Roman?

*Ven.* Hasten back, Tenantius,  
And say, that Dumnorix consents to parley.

*Dum.* Ha! trust our freedom in a Roman's pow'r?

*Tenan.* Unarm'd and single will the Roman join  
thee.

*Dum.* Oh, ineffectual effort!

*Ven.* Only see him,  
If but to parley for thy children's safety.  
Weak as I am, unequal to these conflicts,  
I would embrace destruction ere request thee  
Once to comply with ought below thy greatness.

*Dum.* Let him approach.

*Enter EBRANCUS.*

What hast thou learnt, my soldier ?

*Ebran.* Like ours, th' Icenian force is all destroyed.

*Dum.* And Boadicea.

*Ebran.* Nought of her I know,  
But that she found the Roman host embattled,  
Which she had fondly deem'd immers'd in sleep.

*Dum.* And so is fall'n a victim to her folly.

Retire.

*[Exit Ebrancus.]*

*Enter FLAMINIUS.*

*Tenan.* *[To Flam.]* Thy helmet cast aside, restores thee

To my remembrance. Lo! thy benefactors.

*Flam.* Brave Dumnorix !

*Dum.* My captive !

*Flam.* Yes, Flaminius,

Who owes to thy humanity his life.

*Dum.* Where hast thou hid thee from my notice ?  
Rather,

Whence now return'st, ennobled with command,  
No more in thralldom, but a Roman leader ?

*Flam.* Amid the tumult of your late defeat  
We sought th' adjacent forest ? thence we pass'd  
The vale below, and reach'd the Roman tents.

*Dum.* And now are masters of our late retreat—  
Had I been cruel, Britain had been safe.

*Flam.* Was this an act unworthy of a soldier ?



*Dum.* Our woes are all the progeny of folly,  
Not charg'd to thee or fortune.

*Ven.* Heav'n, well pleas'd,  
Perhaps ordain'd this unforeseen event,  
That our benevolence to brave Flaminius  
Its due return of gratitude should find.

*Flam.* The life you gave me, to your mutual welfare  
I here devote. My influence, my pow'r,  
My thoughts, my care, to soften your afflictions,  
Shall all combine. Surrender to your friend,  
Before Suetonius with his legions pours  
On your defenceless camp, who long in arms  
Hath stood, expecting the appointed signal,  
Which he enjoin'd us with the dawn to rear.

*Dum.* Though thou didst well, accepting life from  
me,  
That gift from thee must Dumnorix refuse.

*Flam.* Thou wilt not rob my gratitude of pow'r  
To shew how well thy goodness was bestow'd.

*Dum.* Thou canst not shew it. If thou sav'st my  
life,  
Canst thou from bonds protect me, and a triumph?

*Flam.* Alas, I cannot!

*Dum.* Wouldst thou see me led  
A sullen captive, and through haughty Rome,  
Inglorious, count my paces to the clink  
Of my own chains? This faithful woman too——

*Ven.* Like thee, disdains a being so preserv'd.

*Flam.* Oh, let me water with my tears your feet!  
“ If ev'ry drop which issues from my heart,

“ Could from the doom you justly scorn secure you,  
“ Before you now the purple sluice should open ;”  
And let my knees, in humblest adoration,  
Before such elevated virtue bend.

Oh, god-like Britons ! my acknowledg’d patrons  
And benefactors, if my soul retain not  
Your memory for ever dear and sacred,  
May disappointment, poverty, and shame,  
Deform my life, and pining sickness close  
My youthful eyes untimely in the grave !

*Dum.* Thou seem’st, of all the Romans, to possess  
A heart which feels for others. Rise and hear.  
Though we reject the wretched boon of life,  
Thou may’st, Flaminius, yet repay our bounty.

*Flam.* Then will I ask no other grace from Heav’n.

*Dum.* We have two children——

*Ven.* Oh, my bleeding heart !

My poor, deserted infants, whom these arms  
No more must cherish, nor my lulling voice  
Hush in the quiet of my shelt’ring bosom !

*Dum.* [*Aside.*] Yet shall not this unman me. I will  
feel

A father’s anguish, but conceal the pain.

[*To Flam.*] Know then, I meant this faithful friend,  
Tenantius,

Should traverse yonder wood to reach my dwelling,  
Which lies remote, and thence convey my sons  
Far from these borders, to extremest north,  
Where they might rest secure, nor share the ills  
Doom’d to their parents. Wilt thou let him pass ?

*Flam.* I will, and Jove be witness to my word.

*Dum.* Give thy last charge, Venusia, to Tenantius.  
One word apart with thee, my Roman friend.  
As thou art gen'rous, answer me with truth.  
When must thou make thy signal ?

*Flam.* At the dawn,  
Whose beams, though faint, already tinge the east.

*Dum.* What time will bring your legions near this  
tent ?

*Flam.* An hour at farthest.

*Dum.* I have heard, Flaminius,  
Of your forefathers' spirit, how they fell  
Oft on their swords to shun ignoble bondage.  
This part have we to act ; and, friendly Roman,  
When thou shalt see our cold remains—my own  
Are little worth attention—Oh, remember  
Venusia's goodness, and her gentle clay  
Defend from shame and insult !

*Flam.* Thou dost pierce  
My heart—I cannot answer—But believe  
These tears sincere.

*Dum.* Enough. Perform thy promise.  
Thy obligations will be then discharg'd.  
Farewell. Fulfil thy general's commands.

[Exit Flam.]

*Ven.* [To Tenan.] Thou future parent of my orphan  
babes,  
Soon as their gen'rous minds imbibe thy precepts,  
And thy example warms their budding virtues,  
Do not forget to tell them, that no perils,

Nor death in all its terrors, can efface  
Maternal love; that their ill-fated mother,  
Amid this awful season of distress,  
Wept but for them, and lost her fears in fondness.

*Dum.* We have been long companions, brave Tenantius,

Thy leader I, once fortunate and great,  
And thou my faithful and intrepid soldier.  
Nay, do not weep; we have not time for wailing.  
By thy approv'd fidelity and love,  
Thy chief, just ent'ring death's unfolded gates,  
Stops, and once more conjures thee to retain  
This his last charge in memory—his children.

[*Exit Tenantius.*]

The sun is risen. All hail! thou last of days  
To this nigh-finish'd being. Radiant pow'r!  
Thou through thy endless journey may'st proclaim  
That Dumnorix died free, for thou shalt view it.  
Behold th' appointed signal from the grove,  
Just as Flaminius warn'd us, is uprear'd,  
To call Suetonius and his legions on.

“Come, Desolation, Tyranny, resort

“To thy new seat; come, Slavery, and bend

“The neck of Albion, all her sons debase,

“And ancient virtue from their hearts expel!”

Now, then, ye honour'd mansions of our fathers,

Ye hallow'd altars, and ye awful groves,

The habitation of our gods, farewell!

“And yet the guilty auth'ress of these woes

“Deserves a share of praise, who, still retaining

“ One unextinguish’d spark of gen’rous honour,  
 “ Scorn’d to remain spectatress or partaker  
 “ Of Albion’s fall, and, dying, still is free.  
 “ Need I say more, Venusia?”

*This last embrace. And now prepare, Venusia.*

*Ven.* Oh, my lord!

*Dum.* Why heaves that sigh?

*Ven.* Alas, I am a woman!

*Dum.* True, a defenceless woman, and expos’d.  
 To keener sorrow by thy matchless beauty;  
 That charm, which captivates the victor’s eye,  
 Yet, helpless to withstand his savage force,  
 Throws wretched woman under double ruin.  
 But wherefore this? Thy virtue knows its duty.

*Ven.* Stay but a little.

*Dum.* Would I might for years!  
 But die that thought!—False tenderness, away!  
 Thou British genius, who art now retiring  
 From this lost region, yet suspend thy flight,  
 And in this conflict lend me all thy spirit—  
 We only ask thee to be free, and die. [Aside.  
 Well, my Venusia, is thy soul resolv’d,  
 Or shall I still afford a longer pause?

*Ven.* Though my weak sex by nature is not arm’d  
 With fortitude like thine, of this be sure,  
 That dear subjection to thy honour’d will,  
 Which hath my life directed, ev’n in death  
 Shall not forsake me; and thy faithful wife  
 Shall with obedience meet thy last commands.  
 But canst thou tell me? Is it hard to die?

*Dum.* Oh ! rather ask me, if to live in shame,  
Captivity, and sorrow, be not hard ?

*Ven.* Oh, miserable !

*Dum.* In a foreign land  
The painful toils of servitude to bear  
From an imperious mistress ?

*Ven.* Dreadful thought !

*Dum.* Or be insulted with the hateful love  
Of some proud master ?

*Ven.* Oh, proceed  
No further !

*Dum.* From thy native seat of dwelling,  
From all the known endearments of thy home,  
From parents, children, friends, and—husband torn.

*Ven.* Stop there, and reach the potion ; nor to drink  
The cure of troubles will I longer pause. [*Ex. Dum.*  
For ev'ry pass'd possession of delight,  
Both in my offspring and their godlike sire,  
A dying matron bends her grateful knee.  
Ye all-disposing pow'rs ! as now these blessings  
Must reach their period, to my sons transfer  
That copious goodness I have shar'd so long !  
Through my resigning soul that promise breathe,  
And my last moments comfort thus with peace !

*Re-enter DUMNORIX with a bowl.*

*Dum.* [*Aside, seeing Venusia on her knees.*] Hold, re-  
solution ; now be doubly arm'd,

[*He gives her the bowl, and she drinks.*

“ Now stand a while before the fanning breeze ;

“ So with its subtle energy the potion,  
 “ Less rudely stealing on the pow’rs of life,  
 “ Will best perform its office, to remove  
 “ Pain, fear, and grief for ever from thy breast.”

*Dost thou not feel already ev’ry terror  
 Begins to lessen, that a calm succeeds  
 Within thy bosom, banishing the sense  
 Of present pain, and fear of future woes ?  
 How dost thou fare, Venusia ?*

*Ven.* I perceive

No alteration ; every sense remains  
 Yet unimpair’d. Then while these moments last,  
 Let me on thee direct my eyes to gaze,  
 While unobstructed still their sight endures ;  
 Let me receive thee to my faithful bosom,  
 Before my heart is motionless and cold.  
 Speak to me, Dumnorix, my lord, my husband !  
 Give one kind accent to thy dying wife,  
 Ere yet my ears be frozen, and thy voice  
 Be heard no longer ; join thy lip to mine,  
 While I can feel thy last and tend’rest kisses.

*Dum.* Yes, I will utter to thy dying ear  
 All my fond heart, sustain thee on my bosom,  
 And cheer thy parting spirit in its flight.  
 Oh, wheresoe’er thy fleeting breath shall pass,  
 Whate’er new body, as the Druids sing,  
 Thou shalt inform hereafter, still thy soul,  
 Thou gentle, kind, and ever-pleasing creature,  
 Shall bear its own felicity along,  
 Still in its native sweetness shall be bless’d,  
 And in its virtue, which can thus subdue

The fear of death, still brave the pow'r of fortune !  
But thou begin'st to droop !

*Ven.* My eyes grow dizzy.

*Dum.* Keep firm, my heart.

[*Aside.*

*Ven.* A heaviness, like sleep,  
O'ercomes my senses—Every limb is faint——  
Thy voice is scarce distinguish'd in my ears.

*Dum.* Indeed !

*Ven.* Alas, thou look'st so kindly on me !  
My weak and darken'd sight deceives me sure,  
Or thy fond eye did never yet o'erflow  
With tenderness like this.

*Dum.* I never view'd thee  
For the last time.

*Ven.* Look, look upon me still——  
Why dost thou turn thy face away ?

*Dum.* For nothing.

*Ven.* Nay, thou art weeping, Dumnorix——And  
wherefore

Wouldst thou conceal thy tears ?

*Dum.* I cannot hide them.

*Ven.* And dost thou weep ?

*Dum.* I do.

*Ven.* Then didst thou love me  
With such excess of fondness ? For Venusia  
Do these soft streams bedew that awful face ?

*Dum.* Love thee ! Behold, when Albion groans  
around me,

Yet thou these springs of tenderness canst open,  
To wet the cheeks of British Dumnorix.

*Ven.* Oh, ecstasy ! which stops my parting-soul,



And gives it vigour to enjoy these transports!—  
Once more receive me to thy breast.

*Dum.* Venusia!

*Ven.* Thy tenderness makes death delightful to me—  
Oh, I would speak!—would answer to thy kindness—  
My falt'ring tongue—

*Dum.* What say'st thou?

*Ven.* Cease to grieve—

No pain molests me—every thought is calm—  
Support my drowsy burthen to that couch—  
Where death—serenely smiles. [He bears her off.

*Enter FLAMINIUS, speaking to the Romans behind the Scene.*

*Flam.* My warlike friends,  
Keep back—Our troops on ev'ry side advance;  
I cannot long control them. Yet I tremble  
To enter there—By Heav'n, he lives, and sees me!

*Re-enter DUMNORIX with his Sword drawn.*

*Dum.* Importunate Flaminius! art thou come  
To rob my dying moments of their quiet?

*Flam.* Forgive the crime of ignorance—Forgive,  
Since accident hath join'd us once again,  
If strong compassion at thy fate, yet pleads—

*Dum.* What, when Venusia is no more?

*Flam.* No more!

*Dum.* No; and be further lesson'd by a Briton,  
Who, since his union with the best of women,  
Hath never known an interval from love,

And at this solemn pause yet melts in fondness ;  
While death's black curtain shrouds my cold *Venusia*,  
Of dearer value doth my soul esteem her,  
Than should those eyes rekindle into lustre,  
And ev'ry charm revive with double pow'r  
Of winning beauty, if alone to shine  
Amid the gloom of bondage.

*Flam.* I will urge

No more. Farewell—our legions hover nigh. [*Exit.*

*Dum.* Now in my breast resume thy wonted seat,  
Thou manly firmness, which so oft has borne me  
Through ev'ry toil and danger. Oh, return,  
Rise o'er my sorrow, and complete thy last,  
Thy highest task, to close a life of glory—  
They come !—Be swift, my sword—By thee to fall,  
Near that dear clay extended, best becomes  
A soldier's courage, and a husband's love. [*Exit.*

*Enter ÆNOBARBUS, FLAMINIUS, and Romans.*

*Ænob.* To Boadicea's quarter I advanc'd,  
At thy request, who, since her last defeat,  
Blind with despair and disappointed fury,  
Fled to her tent ; expiring there I found her,  
With one ill-fated daughter, both by poison :  
Nor had the friendly Emmeline escap'd,  
But by the swift prevention of my hand.  
Dost thou not thank me, whose suggestion prompted  
Our quick return to seize the secret pass ?  
Thou gav'st me freedom ; love and fame repay thee.

*Flam.* If thou couldst add, that Dumnorix surviv'd——

*Ænob.* [*Looking into the tent.*] Thou seest the gods have otherwise decreed.

Forbear to mingle vain regret with conquest.

He hath done nobly. Fair befall his urn.

Death is his triumph, which a captive life

Had forfeited to Rome, with all the praise

Now from the virtuous to his ashes due.

*Flam.* Then art thou fall'n at last, thou mighty tow'r,

And more than Roman edifice of glory ?

See, too, Venusia, pale in death's embrace,

Presents her faded beauties. Lovely ruin !

Of ev'ry grace and virtue once the seat,

The last kind office from my hand receive,

Which shall unite thee to thy husband's side,

And to one grave your mingling reliques trust.

There soon a hallow'd monument shall rise ;

Insculptor'd laurel with the myrtle twin'd,

The well-wrought stone adorning, shall proclaim

His gen'rous valour, and thy faithful love.

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

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## EPILOGUE.

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Spoken by FLAMINIUS.

*NOW we have shewn the fatal fruits of strife,  
A hero bleeding with a virtuous wife,  
A field of war embr'd with nations' gore,  
Which to the dust the hopes of Albion bore:  
If weak description, and the languid flow  
Of strains unequal to this theme of woe,  
Have fail'd to move the sympathising breast,  
And no soft eyes their melting sense express'd,  
Not all the wit this after scene might share  
Can give success where you refus'd a tear;  
Much less, if happ'ly still the poet's art  
Hath stol'n persuasive to the feeling heart,  
Will he with fancy's wanton hand efface  
From gen'rous minds compassion's pleasing trace;  
Nor from their thoughts, while pensive they pursue  
This maze of sorrow, snatch the moral clue.  
If yet to him those pow'rs of sacred song  
To melt the heart, and raise the mind, belong,  
Dar'd he to hope this sketch of early youth  
Might stand th' award of nature and of truth,  
Encourag'd thus, hereafter might he soar  
With double strength, and loftier scenes explore,  
And, following fortune through her various wiles,  
Shew struggling virtue, dress'd in tears, or smiles;  
Perhaps his grateful labours would requite  
With frequent off'rings one propitious night.*

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THE END.

THE  
**CARMELITE.**

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A  
TRAGEDY,  
BY RICHARD CUMBERLAND, Esq.

---

ADAPTED FOR  
THEATRICAL REPRESENTATION,  
AS PERFORMED AT THE  
THEATRE-ROYAL, DRURY-LANE.

---

REGULATED FROM THE PROMPT-BOOKS,  
*By Permission of the Managers.*

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*"The Lines distinguished by inverted Commas, are omitted in the Representation."*

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LONDON :

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*Printed for the Proprietors, under the Direction of*  
JOHN BELL, British Library, STRAND,  
Bookseller to His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales.

MDCCLXI.



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TO  
MRS. SIDDONS.

---

MADAM,

*I Cannot commit this Tragedy to the press without availing myself of the opportunity to acknowledge the support you gave it on the stage. I felt myself under the weight of a responsibility during its trial before the public, which made those moments extremely anxious; for had I been adjudged guilty of misemploying your talents, I must have sunk under the sentence without appeal, conscious of having conceived the fable, and addressed every feature and expression of the prevailing character, professedly to you: in short, there was no possible shelter for self-prejudice (had that been amongst my failings) to resort to, where all the performers stood so ably in the scene, and where the spectacle was so fully furnished by the liberality of the Proprietors, that I can honestly declare my endeavours, antecedent to the exhibition, had not been employed to urge their spirit to expence, but, on the contrary, to restrain it.*

*I am deeply grateful to a generous and candid Audience for their reception of this Tragedy; and though I am not to learn how much of their applause*

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*rests personally with you and your associates in the cast, I am no less penetrated with a sense of the favours I am to transfer to others, than of those which I may be permitted to retain to myself.*

*The character of our Drama, in its best examples, is so close to Nature, that you, madam, who are apt to give so perfect a reflection of her image, seem born for the elevation of the British stage. The Author, who shall write for you, must copy from no other model but Nature; every thing must be addressed to the spectator's heart, and of course must flow from his own; artificial situations, tricking incidents, and studied declamations, must be thrown aside where you are to appear; it will not be his aim to make you loquacious in the scene, because he has such fine recitation to resort to, nor will he call you out into starts and attitudes, merely because he has a form so striking to display at his command; glittering passages, and traps for plaudits will be beneath his attention; he will lead simplicity in his hand, and keep sublimity in his eye.*

*To such a Poet may I now consign you!—Yet before I make over so valuable a conveyance, let me apprise him of the extent of his good fortune; and that it is not only in the public representation of his scenes where he will find your importance, but in every stage of the business preparatory to their exhi-*

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*bition. To add one voice to a multitude is a small tribute to your talents; but to bear testimony to your zeal, diligence, and punctuality in all those duties of your profession, which, though of equal moment, are of less notoriety, falls first to my lot; and if my successor shall feel these offices as sensibly as I do, he will acknowledge stronger reasons to esteem you for the good qualities originating with yourself, than for the brilliant gifts which you derive from nature.*

*Proceed in your course, and depend upon a generous Public. It would be living to an evil purpose indeed, if it were for no other purpose but to depress them we live with; and your contemporaries will not fail to see how much it is their concern to foster and protect a genius, which contributes to render their own times and their own country superior to all others.*

*I have the honour to be,*

MADAM,

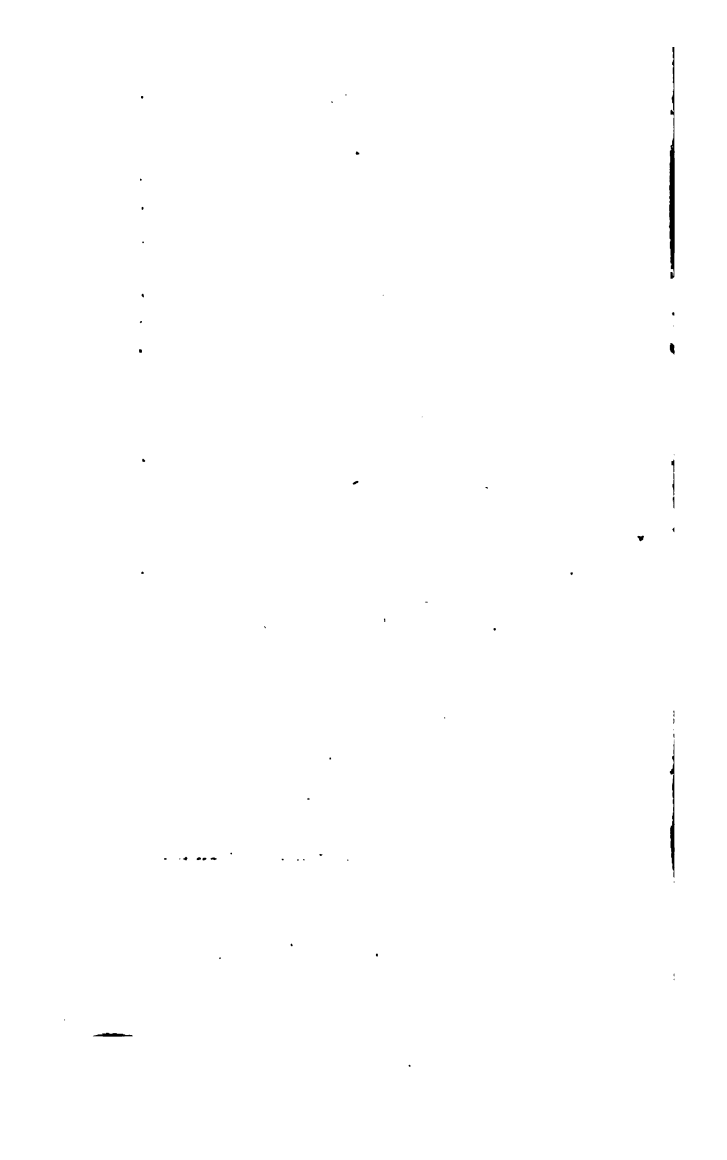
*Your most faithful and*

*Most obedient Servant,*

RICH. CUMBERLAND.

London, Dec. 6, 1784.

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## PROLOGUE.

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BY THE AUTHOR.

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Spoken by Mr. PALMER.

*OLD Drury's dock presents a launch this night,  
New from the keel, (fair speed The Carmelite !)  
True British-built, and from the Tragic slip ;  
She mounts great guns—tho' not a first-rate ship :  
A gallant Knight commands, of ancient fame  
And Norman blood, St. Valori his name ;  
On his main-top the Christian Cross he bears,  
From Holy Land he comes, and Pagan wars :  
Twenty long years his lady mourns him dead,  
And bathes with faithful tears a widow'd bed ;  
Our scene presents him shipwreck'd on her coast—  
No sign, we hope, our venture will be lost.*

*Yet bold the Bard, to mount ambition's wave,  
And launch his wit upon a wat'ry grave ;  
Sharp Critic rocks beneath him lie in wait,  
And envious quicksands bar the Muse's strait ;  
Wild o'er his head Detraction's billows break,  
Doubt chills his heart, and terror pales his cheek :  
Hungry and faint, what cordials can he bring  
From the cold nymph of the Pierian spring ?*

B ij

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*What stores collect from bare Parnassus' head,  
Where blooms no vineyard, where no beeves are fed?  
And great Apollo's laurels, which impart  
Fame to his head, are famine to his heart.—*

*Yet on he toils, and eager bends his eyes,  
Where Fame's bright temple glitters to the skies.  
Ah, sirs, 'tis easy work, to sit on shore,  
And tutor him who tugs the labouring oar :  
Whilst he amidst the surging ocean steers,  
Now here, now there, as fashion's current veers :  
Rouse, rouse for his protection ! you, who sit  
Rang'd in deep phalanx, arbiters of wit !  
And you aloft there, keep your beacon bright,  
Oh, make your Eddy-stone shew forth its light ;  
So shall our bard steer so its friendly blaze,  
And anchor in the haven of your praise.*

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**Dramatis Personae.**

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***DRURY - LANE.***

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***Men.***

St. VALORI <i>the Carmelite,</i>	-	-	Mr. Smith.
Lord HILDEBRAND,	-	-	Mr. Palmer.
Lord De COURCI,	-	-	Mr. Aickin:
MONTGOMERI,	-	-	Mr. Kemble.
GYFFORD,	-	-	Mr. Packer.
FITZ-ALLAN,	-	-	Mr. Phillimore.
RAYMOND,	-	-	Mr. Faucett.

***Woman.***

MATILDA, <i>the lady of St. Valori,</i>	-	-	Mrs. Siddons.
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***Attendants, &c.***

***Time, that of the Representation.***

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THE  
CARMELITE.

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ACT I. SCENE I.

*A rocky Shore, with a View of the Sea, at Break of Day.*

*Enter FITZ-ALLAN and RAYMOND meeting.*

*Raymond.*

WELL met, Fitz-Allan ; what's the time of day ?

*Fitz-All.* Broad morning by the hour.

*Ray.* Sleeps the sun yet ?

Or has the stormy south, that howls so loud,  
Blown out his untrimm'd lamp, and left us here  
To be witch-ridden by this hag of night,  
Out of time's natural course ?

*Fitz-All.* Methinks the winds,  
Which peal'd like thunder thro' Glendarlock's towers,  
Have lower'd their note a pitch ; the flecker'd clouds,  
Lifting their misty curtain in the east,  
Unmask the weeping day.

*Enter MONTGOMERI hastily.*

*Mont.* Oh, are you men ?  
Have you less mercy than the winds and waves,  
That you stand here aloof ?

*Fitz-All.* Why, what has chanc'd ?

*Mont.* A noble vessel breaks upon the rocks,  
That jut from old Dunnose's rugged base ;  
And as the floating fragments drive ashore  
Our plund'ring islanders (convert their hearts,  
Holy St. Michael!) dash the drowning wretches  
From the poor wreck they cling to, and engulph them  
Quick in the boiling waves : by Heav'n that made me,  
I cou'd forswear my nature, when I see  
Man so degenerate !

*Ray.* Lo ! we are ready :  
Lead to the beach.

*Mont.* Alas ! 'tis now too late :  
I had not left it but that all was lost :  
The element had mercy ; man had none.  
Two I have sav'd ; the one a Carmelite,  
Noble the other in his mien and habit ;  
I left them in the outskirts of the grove ;  
Let us go forth, my friends, and bring them in :  
You to that quarter, I to this—Away ! [*Excunt severally.*]

*Enter Lord HILDEBRAND and St. VALORI.*

*St.Val.* Bear up, Lord Hildebrand ! there's hope in  
view.



See'st thou yon turrets, that o'ertop the wood ?  
There we may shelter from the storm, and men  
More merciless than rocks and winds, that wreck'd  
Our strong-ribb'd galley in the foaming surge.

*Hild.* I see the towers you point at, but I fear  
My limbs will fail their burden ere we reach them.  
Let me lie down beneath these oaks, and die.

*St. Val.* If thus you shake with the soul's ague, fear,  
Back to the sea, and seek the death you fled from ;  
Make not a coward's grave on English ground ;  
Your life is stak'd, your gauntlet is exchang'd,  
Each drop of blood about you is in pledge  
To meet the champion of St. Valori,  
A lady's champion in King Henry's lists :  
There fight ; or, if you needs must die, die there ;  
Fall, as a Norman knight shou'd fall, in arms.

*Hild.* Father, your words accord not with your  
weeds.

*St. Val.* Our ancestors were holy men, and they  
Ordain'd the combat, as the test of truth ;  
Let them who made the law defend the law,  
Our part is to obey it.—Hark ! who comes ?  
The islanders will be upon us.—Stand !

*Enter FITZ-ALLAN and RAYMOND.*

*Fitz-All.* What ho ! Montgomeri !—the men are  
found.

*St. Val.* Inhuman Englishmen ! Will you destroy  
Your brethren ? We are Normans.—

*Enter MONTGOMERI.*

*Mont.* Ye are men,  
Let that suffice; we are no savages.

*St. Val.* 'Tis the brave youth who sav'd us.

*Mont.* Heav'n hath sav'd you,  
To Heav'n give thanks, O men redeem'd from  
death:

All else have perish'd!—'Tis a barbarous coast.

*St. Val.* How is your island nam'd?

*Mont.* The Isle of Wight.

*St. Val.* Alas! that isle so fair should prove so  
fatal!—

And you our benefactor, by what name  
Shall we record you in our prayers?

*Mont.* I am call'd  
Montgomeri,

*St. Val.* 'Twill be our grateful office,  
Generous Montgomeri, to make suit to Heaven  
To bless, reward, and from distress like ours  
Protect you ever.

*Mont.* Now declare thyself,  
And this thy mournful friend, whom grief makes  
dumb,  
Say who he is.

*Hild.* A wretch without a name.

*St. Val.* A gentleman of Normandy he is,  
One who has seen good days.—'Tis now no time  
To tell you further: he has wounds about him,

And bruises dealt him on the craggy beach,  
That cry for charity.—Whose is that castle?

*Mont.* A lady's, whom we serve, of Norman birth;

*St. Val.* Then lead us to her gates, for we are Nor-  
mans;

Poor helpless men, fainting with want of food  
And over-watching: tedious nights and days  
We struggled with the storm: the greedy deep  
Has swallow'd up our ship, our friends, our all,  
And left us to your mercy. Sure your lady,  
Who owns so fair a mansion, owns withal  
A heart to give us welcome.—You are silent.

*Fitz-All.* To save you, and supply your pressing  
wants

With food and raiment, and what else you need,  
We promise, nothing doubting: more than this  
Stands not within our privilege—no stranger  
Enters her castle.

*St. Val.* Wherefore this exclusion?

What can she fear from us?

*Fitz-All.* Ask not a reason;

We question not her orders, but obey them.

*St. Val.* Then lay us down before her castle-  
gates,

And let us die: inhospitable gates!

Your roofs shall echo with our famish'd shrieks.—

A Norman she! impossible: our wolves  
Have hearts more pitiful.

*Mont.* Your saints in bliss,  
Your calendar of martyrs does not own

A soul more pure, a virtue more sublime :  
Her very name will strike defamers dumb.

*St. Val.* Speak it.

*Mont.* Saint Valori.

*St. Val.* Uphold me, Heaven !

The ways of Providence are full of wonder,  
And all its works are mercy.—How now, sir !  
Will you betray yourself ? what shakes you thus ?

*Hild.* I sicken at the heart : let me go hence,  
And make myself a grave.

*St. Val.* Be patient : stay !——

And hath your lady here consum'd her youth  
In pensive solitude ? Twenty long years,  
And still a widow !

*Mont.* Still a mournful widow.

*St. Val.* Hath she such sorrows of her own, and yet  
No heart to pity ours ? It cannot be :  
I'll not believe but she will take us in :  
And comfort her poor countrymen.

*Mont.* Forbid it, Heav'n,  
That misery thus should plead, and no friend found  
To speak in its behalf !—I'll move her for you.

*St. Val.* The Mother of our Lord reward you for it !  
'Twill be a Christian deed.

*Fitz-All.* Montgomeri, turn ;  
Have you your senses ? the attempt is madness.

*Ray.* Where is the man, native or foreigner,  
(Inmates excepted) ever pass'd her doors ?—  
Who dares to ask it ?

*Mont.* I ; Montgomeri.

*Ray.* So dare not I.

*Fitz-Al.* Nor I: success attend you!  
But share the attempt I dare not—so farewell.

[*Exeunt.*]

*Mont.* Farewell to both!—Strangers, be not dismay'd,  
I'll soon return; the place will be your safeguard.

[*Exit Mont.*]

*St. Val.* Lord Hildebrand, stand not aghast: you see

The youth is confident: look up and live!

*Hild.* By my soul's penitence, I'd rather die  
Unpitied, starv'd, and to her castle dogs  
Bequeath my untomb'd carcase, than receive  
Life from her hands; the widow of Saint Valori!  
That brave heroic champion of the Cross,  
Whom, from the holy wars returning home,  
Within the rugged Pyrenæan pass—

*St. Val.* No more of that: I have your full confession;

You slew Saint Valori, and now his widow  
Provokes you by her champion to defend  
The rights you seiz'd, the title you inherit,  
And hold by bloody charter.—What's your fear?  
Saint Valori's dead; he cannot rise again,  
And beard you in the lists.

*Hild.* Oh, that he could!  
So I were not a murderer.

*St. Val.* Grant you slew him,  
Twenty long years have staunch'd the bleeding wound

I am a helpless solitary woman,  
A widow, who have lost—O God ! O God !  
'Twill turn my brain to speak of what I've lost :  
It is amongst the lightest of my griefs  
That I have lost myself.

*St. Val.* Thyself !

*Mat.* My senses :

At best they are but half my own, sometimes  
I am bereft of all. Therefore I lead  
On this lone coast a melancholy life,  
And shut my gate, but not my charity,  
Against the stranger.

*St. Val.* Oh, support me, Heaven !  
'Tis she, 'tis she ! that woe-tun'd voice is hers ;  
Those eyes, that cast their pale and waning fires  
With such a melting languor thro' my soul,  
Those eyes are hers and sorrow's.—Heart, be still !  
*She speaks again.*

*Mat.* You shall have food and clothing ;  
I'll bring you medicines for your bruised wounds.  
What else you need, declare.

*St. Val.* If I speak now,  
She cannot bear it ; it will turn her brain.  
What shall I say ?—We are your countrymen—  
Oh my full heart ! Oh anguish to dissemble !

*Mat.* Nay, if you weep—

*St. Val.* Let us but touch your altar :  
We are the sole sad relics of the wreck.  
Let us but kneel and offer up one prayer  
For our soul's peace, then turn us forth to die.

*Mat.* Mercy forbid it ! Oh, approach and enter  
If you can weep, we will converse whole days,  
And speak no other language ; we will sit,  
Like fountain statues, face to face oppos'd,  
And each to other tell our griefs in tears,  
Yet neither utter word.—Pray you, pass on ;  
I had not been thus strict, but that I hear  
Lord Hildebrand is on the seas : I hope  
You are not of his friends.

*Hild.* Death to my heart !

O father Carmelite, I must have leave——

*St. Val.* On your salvation, peace !

*Mat.* What wou'd he say ?

*St. Val.* His brain begins to turn : take him away.  
I pray you, lead him hence. [*Mont. leads off Hild.*]

*Mat.* Alas ! I pity him.

Why dost thou stay behind ?—Whence that emotion ?  
What wou'dst thou more ?

*St. Val.* I wou'd invoke a blessing,  
But that each sainted spirit in the skies  
Will be thy better advocate.

*Mat.* Remember,  
When you converse with Heav'n, there is a wretch  
Who will be glad of any good man's prayers.—  
Farewell.

*St. Val.* Oh, tell me, have you then endur'd  
Twenty long years of mournful widowhood ?

*Mat.* They say 'tis twenty years ago he died ;  
I cannot speak of time : it may be so ;  
Yet I shou'd think 'twas yesterday.

*St. Val.* I saw you—

*Mat.* You saw me! When?

*St. Val.* When you did wed your lord—

The paragon of all this world you was.

Grief has gone o'er you like a wintry cloud.

You've heard this voice before.

*Mat.* I think I have :

It gives a painful sense of former days :

I've heard such voices in my dreams; sometimes

Convers'd with them all night; but then they told me

My senses wander'd.—Pray you, do not harm me ;

Leave me, good Monk ; indeed I know you not.

*St. Val.* I wore no monkish cowl in that gay hour

When you wore bridal white. On Pagan ground,

Beneath the banner of the Christian Cross,

Faithful I fought ; I was God's soldier then,

Tho' now his peaceful servant.

*Mat.* You have fought

Under the Christian Cross!—You shake my brain.

*St. Val.* Peace to your thoughts! I will no farther  
move you :

Shall I not lead you hence ?

*Mat.* Stand off; stand off!

The murderer of Saint Valori is abroad ;

The bloody Hildebrand is on the seas.—

Rise, rise, ye waves! blow from all points, ye winds,

And whelm th' accursed plank that wafts him over

In fathomless perdition!—Let him sink,

He and his hateful crew ! let none escape,

Not one; or if one, let him only breathe



To tell his tale, and die!—Away! begone!  
You've made me mad.

*St. Val.* I was Saint Valeri's friend :  
He never yet bled with the battle's wound,  
But I shed drop for drop : when o'er the sands  
Of sultry Palestine with panting heart  
He march'd, my panting heart with his kept time,  
And number'd throb for throb.

*Mat.* Where are my people ?  
What ho! Montgomeri! Lead, lead me hence.

*Enter MONTGOMERI hastily, with GYFFORD.*

Give me thine arm! support me! Oh, 'tis well,  
To horse, to horse!—I have a champion now,  
Whose hand, heart, soul are mine, and mine are his ;  
One who has valour to assert my cause,  
And worth to wear the honours he defends.

*Mont.* What hast thou done, old man ?

*Gyf.* Stay not to question ;  
Look to the lady : leave the Monk with me.

*Mat.* Come, let us hence ; I do not live without  
thee. *[Exit with Montgomeri.]*

*St. Val.* Amazement!—Speak, what kindred, what  
affection,  
What passion binds her to that youth?—Resolve me,  
Who and what is he ?

*Gyf.* You are curious, father.  
Who he may be I know not ; what he was  
I well remember.

*St. Val.* What was he ?

*Gyf.* Her page ;  
A menial thing, no better than myself.

*St. Val.* Heavens! can it be? Will she so far descend

From her great name, to wanton with her page?  
Saw you the look she gave him?

*Gyf.* I did see it.

*St. Val.* It seem'd as tho' his eyes had magic in them,

That charm'd away her madness.—Hah! you sigh:  
What means that pensive movement of your head?  
Answer!

*Gyf.* Good father, question me no more.  
Fortune can level all things in this world,  
Pull down the mighty, and exalt the mean:  
But you and I methinks have outliv'd wonders.—  
Now to the castle! Shut both ears and eyes:  
Hear without noting; see, but not observe. [*Exeunt.*]

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## ACT II. SCENE I.

*An Apartment in MATILDA's Castle. Enter SAINT VALORI and GYFFORD.*

*Gyfford.*

WITH awful wonder I survey and hear you,  
Whilst thro' the veil of that disguiseful habit,  
Thro' all the changes time and toil have wrought

In that once-noble visage, I scarce trace  
The lineaments of my most honour'd lord.

*St. Val.* Awake from this surprise, and hear me,  
Gyfford.

I am no spectre, but thy living master :  
Wounded and breathless on the ground I lay,  
Welt'ring in blood : th' assassins fled and left me ;  
There I had soon expir'd, but that a company  
Of merchants, journeying from Venice, found me,  
And charitably staunch'd my bleeding wounds.  
To their own homes they bore me : heal'd, restor'd,  
In a Venetian galley I embark'd,  
And sail'd for Genoa ; but, ere we reach'd  
Our destin'd port, a Saracen assail'd  
And master'd our weak crew.—To tell the tale  
Of my captivity, escape, return,  
Would ask more leisure, and a mind at ease.

*Gyf.* But why does brave Saint Valori appear  
A bearded Carmelite ?

*St. Val.* This holy habit  
Thro' a long course of dangerous pilgrimage  
Has been my saving passport : thus attir'd,  
I reach'd my native castle, found it lorded  
By the usurper Hildebrand ; with zeal  
I burn'd to call my faithful people round me,  
And throw off my disguise ; this I had done,  
But straight arriv'd a herald from King Henry  
To warn him to the lists against the champion  
Of my supposed widow : the pale coward

Shrunk, yet obey'd the summons. The thought  
struck me

To join his train, and in my sovereign's presence,  
At the last trumpet's signal, to come forth  
Before the king, the lords, and armed knights,  
And strike confusion to the caitiff's soul.—  
The rest needs no relation.

*Gyf.* 'Tis resolv'd

To-morrow for Southampton we depart ;  
There Henry keeps his court.

*St. Val.* Why then, to-morrow  
Truth and the morning sun shall rise together,  
And this black night of doubt shall be dispell'd :  
Till then lock fast my secret in thy heart,  
And know me for none other than I seem.  
Lo, where they come ! Yet, yet I will be patient ;  
Time will bring all things forth.—*Gyfford*, with-  
draw. [*Exeunt.*

*Enter MATILDA and MONTGOMERI.*

*Mat.* I think he said he was my husband's friend ;  
If so I've been too harsh : reason forsook me,  
For he did speak of things that rent my heart :  
But let that pass.—Dost thou observe, *Montgomery* ?

*Mont.* With fix'd attention and devoted heart  
I hear, and note your pleasure.

*Mat.* I am calm,  
Thou seest I am, and not about to speak,  
As sometimes, when my thoughts obey no order :  
Therefore I pray thee mark.—Thou must have noted

With what a tenderness I've train'd thee up  
From helpless infancy to blooming manhood :  
Hast thou not noted this ?

*Mont.* I were most vile  
Did I forget it.

*Mat.* I am sure thou dost not ;  
For from the moment of thy birth till now  
I've nurs'd thy opening virtues, mark'd their growth,  
And gloried in the fruit of my adoption :  
I've register'd each movement of thy soul,  
And find it tun'd to honour's loftiest pitch,  
To soft affection modell'd, and to love,  
The harmony of nature : my best hopes  
Are satisfied, and thou art all I pray'd for.

*Mont.* What thou hast made me that I truly am,  
And will be ever : hands, head, heart are yours.

*Mat.* The day is coming on, the wish'd-for day  
(After a night of twice ten tedious years)  
At length is coming on : justice is granted ;  
I go to Henry's court ; Lord Hildebrand  
Is summon'd to the lists : and where's the man  
To avenge the widow's cause ?

*Mont.* Where is the man !  
And can you want a champion ?—Have I liv'd  
The creature of your care, the orphan child  
Of your adopting charity, the thing  
Your plastic bounty fashion'd from the dust  
Of abject misery ; and does my heart  
Utter one drop of blood that is not yours,  
One artery that does not beat for you ?

*Mat.* Know, then, I have a champion, noble, brave,  
Heir of the great Saint Valori, my son.

*Mont.* What do I hear ? thy son !—Where has he  
liv'd,

That I have never seen him ? never known  
There was a living hero of the name ?  
Oh, tell me where he is, that I may fly  
To do him faithful service, on my knee  
Brace on his glittering armour, bear his shield,  
The glorious badge of his nobility,  
And shout with triumph—when his conqu'ring sword  
Cleaves the assassin's crest.—Oh send me hence,  
To hail his victory, or share his fall !

*Mat.* Thou art my son.

*Mont.* Merciful god ! thy son !

*Mat.* Thou art my son ; for thee alone I've liv'd,  
For thee I have surviv'd a murder'd husband ;  
For thee—but it would break thy filial heart  
To hear what I have suffer'd ; madness seiz'd me,  
And many a time (sweet Jesus intercede,  
For I was not myself !) yes, many a time  
In my soul's anguish, with my desperate hand  
Rais'd for the stroke of death, a thought, a glance  
Of thee, my child, has smote my shatter'd brain,  
And stopt th' impending blow.

*Mont.* Oh, spare thyself,  
Spare me the dread description !

*Mat.* Thou hast been  
Thy mother's guardian angel : furious once,  
In the mind's fever, to Glendarlock's roof

Madd'ning I rush'd ; there, from the giddy edge  
 Of the projecting battlements, below,  
 Measuring the fearful leap, I cast my eye :  
 Thy cherub form arrested it ; my child  
 Upon the pavement underneath my feet  
 Sported with infant playfulness ; my blood  
 Drove back upon my heart ; suspended, pois'd,  
 High hung in air, with outstretch'd arms I stood,  
 Pondering the dreadful deed ; thy fate prevail'd,  
 Nature flew up, and push'd me from the brink—  
 I shrunk, recoil'd, and started into reason.

*Mont.* Oh terrible to thought ! Oh pictur'd horror !  
 It pierces to my brain ; there's madness in it.

*Mat.* Yes, sorrow had o'erturn'd thy mother's brain :  
 I have been mad, my son ; and oftentimes  
 I find, alas ! all is not yet compos'd,  
 Sound, and at peace : it takes a world of time  
 To heal the wounds of reason ; even now,  
 When I would fain relate my life's sad story,  
 I cannot range my scatter'd thoughts in order  
 To tell it as I shou'd.—I pray thee, pardon me ;  
 I'll do my best to recollect myself,  
 If thou'lt be patient.

*Mont.* Patient ! Oh, thou sufferer !  
 Oh, thou maternal softness ! hear thy son,  
 Thus kneeling, bathing with his tears thy feet,  
 Swear to cast off each fond alluring thought,  
 The world, its honours, pleasures, and ambition ;  
 Here in this solitude to live with thee,  
 To thee alone devoted !

*Mat.* No, my son :

Tho' in this solitude I have conceal'd thee,  
Ev'n from thyself conceal'd thee, to evade  
A fell usurper's search, and stemm'd the tide  
Of nature, gushing to a mother's heart ;  
Still I have done it in the sacred hope  
Of some auspicious hour, when I might shew thee  
Bright as thy father's fame.

*Mont.* I own the cause,  
And know how watchfully this hungry vulture  
Has hover'd o'er thee on his felon wings.  
Now I can solve this solitude around us,  
Why thou hast built thine airy in this cragg,  
And with a mother's care conceal'd thy young.

*Mat.* Another day, and then—meanwhile be secret ;  
Discovery now wou'd but disturb the house  
From its sobriety, and mar the time  
Of awful preparation.—Pass to-morrow !—  
(Oh, all ye saints and angels, make it happy !)  
Then, if thou com'st a living conqueror home,  
This roof that still has echoed to my groans,  
Shall ring with triumphs to Saint Valori's name :  
But if——

*Mont.* Avert the sad, ill-omen'd word !  
Thou shalt not name it : my great father's spirit  
Swells in my bosom.—When my falchion gleams,  
When the red cross darts terror from my shield,  
The coward's heart shall quail, and Heaven's own  
arm,  
Ere mine can strike, shall lay the murderer low,



*Mat.* Thy father stirs within thee: hark! methinks

I hear the shrieks of his unburied ghost,  
Screaming for vengeance.—Oh, support, defend me!  
See where he gleams, he bursts upon my sight!  
'Tis he! 'tis he! I clasp him to my heart;  
My hero! my Saint Valori! my husband!

[*Embraces him.*]

*Enter GYFFORD unseen; starts.*

*Gyf.* Husband! oh fatal word! undone for ever!

*Mat.* I will array thee in a sacred suit,  
The very armour my Saint Valori wore,  
When in the single combat he unhors'd  
And slew the Lord Fitz-Osborn. On that helm  
High-plumed victory again shall stand,  
And clap her wings exulting: from that shield  
Vengeance with gorgon terrors shall look forth,  
Awfully frowning.—Hah! what man art thou?  
[*Discovering Gyfford.*]

Gyfford, what wouldst thou? wherefore this intrusion?

*Gyf.* A noble messenger from Henry's court  
Is landed on the isle.

*Mat.* From the king, say'st thou?

*Gyf.* A runner of his train, whose utmost speed  
Scarce distanc'd him an hour, is now arriv'd,  
And gives this warning.

*Mat.* Did you not enquire  
His master's name and title?

D ij

*Gyf.* Lord De Courci.

*Mat.* A generous and right noble lord he is :  
Our Normandy boasts not a worthier baron,  
Nor one affianc'd to our house more kindly :  
Prepare to give him welcome.—Follow me.

[*Exit with Montgomeri.*]

*Gyf.* Yes, to destruction, for that way thou lead'st.  
Husband!—her husband! her Saint Valori!  
It cannot be.—Without the church's rites  
Wed him she could not; to conceal those rites,  
And wed by stealth, is here impossible.  
What must I think?—That he is yet her husband  
In meditation only, not in form.  
Embracing too!—Oh mortal stab to honour!  
O shame, shame, shame! that I shou'd live to see it.

*Enter SAINT VALORI hastily.*

*St. Val.* What hast thou seen? my mind is on the  
rack :

Thou'st been in conference with thy lady; speak!—  
If thou hast aught discover'd that affects  
My honour, tell it.

*Gyf.* Hard task you enjoin;  
Wou'd rather I were in my grave, than living  
To utter what I've seen.

*St. Val.* Nay, no evasion.

*Gyf.* For the world's worth I would not with my  
knowledge  
Add or diminish of the truth one tittle.

*St. Val.* Gyfford, as thou shalt render up the truth  
To the great Judge of hearts, say what thou know'st

Of my unhappy wife ; nor more nor less,  
Give me the proof unvarnish'd.

*Gyf.* I surpris'd

Her and Montgomeri heart to heart embracing—

*St. Val.* Death ! Heart to heart embracing !—Wo-  
man, woman !

*Gyf.* Fond and entranc'd within his arms she lay ;  
Then with uplifted rapturous eyes exclaim'd,  
' My hero ! my Saint Valori ! my husband !'

*St. Val.* Husband ! reflect.—Art sure she call'd  
him husband ?

*Gyf.* If there be faith in man, I've spoke the truth.

*St. Val.* Why then the truth is out, and all is past :  
I have no more to ask.

*Gyf.* Hear me with favour ;  
I'll not abuse the licence of old age  
And faithful service with too many words.

*St. Val.* What canst thou tell me ?—I have one  
within

That is my monitor : not unprepar'd  
I meet this fatal stroke, nor with revilings  
Or impious curses (be my witness, Gyfford !)  
Do I profane Heav'n's ear, tho' hard and painful  
This bitter visitation of its wrath.

*Gyf.* Tho' to the sure conviction of my senses  
I saw and heard what I have now reported,  
Yet, circumstances weigh'd, I must believe,  
As yet she is not wedded.

*St. Val.* Hah ! not wedded ?  
Perish the man who dares to breathe a doubt  
D iij

Of her unspotted chastity : not wedded !

Yet heart to heart embracing ! dreadful thought !—

Death in his direst shape approach me rather

Than that dishonest doubt !

*Gyf.* Wou'd I had died

Ere I had seen this day !

*St. Val.* Wretch that I am,

Why was I snatch'd from slaughter ? why deliver'd

From barbarous infidels ? why, when o'erwhelm'd

And sinking in th' oblivious deep, preserv'd,

Wash'd like a floating fragment to the shore,

Sav'd, nourish'd, ransom'd by the very hand

That cuts my heart asunder ; set in view

Of all my soul held dear ; and now, ev'n now,

As I reach'd forth my hand to seize the goal,

The resting-place and haven of my hope,

Dash'd in a moment back, and lost for ever ?

*Gyf.* Such is the will of Heaven ! For me, thus old,

And blighted with misfortune, I've no strength,

No root to bear against this second storm ;

There, where I fall, I'll make myself a grave.

*St. Val.* No more of this : you've heard my last  
complaint ;

For I must soon put off these monkish weeds,

And what a consecrated knight should do,

Fitting the Cross he wears, that must be done.—

How stands your preparation for to-morrow ?

Will she depart ?

*Gyf.* I think she will ; for now

The Lord De Courci, from King Henry sent,

Bears courtly salutation to your lady,  
With formal summons to her challenger.

*St. Val.* If it be that De Courci who was once  
My youth's companion, and my bosom friend,  
A more accomplished knight ne'er carried arms :  
His coming is most timely.—Tell me, Gyfford,  
Rememberest thou the armour which I wore  
When in the lists I combated Fitz-Osborn ?—  
I gave it to my wife.

*Gyf.* I well remember.

*St. Val.* And hath she kept it, think'st thou ?

*Gyf.* She hath kept it.

*St. Val.* 'Tis well ; for that's the suit, the very suit,  
Which I must wear to-morrow.

*Gyf.* Ah, my lord !  
She hath bestow'd that armour on her champion ;  
And young Montgomeri with to-morrow's dawn  
Starts, like another Phaeton, array'd  
In substituted splendor : on his arm  
He bears the shield of great Saint Valori,  
A golden branch of palm, with this device,  
' Another, and the same !'—'Twill be a pageant  
Glittering as vanity and love can make it.

*St. Val.* Mournful as death.—My armour will she  
take ?

My shield, my banners, to array her champion ?  
Let them beware how they divide the spoil  
Before the lion's kill'd.—Oh, fall of virtue !  
Oh, all ye matron powers of modesty !  
How time's revolving wheel wears down the edge

Of sharp affliction! Widows' sable weeds  
Soon turn to grey; drop a few tears upon them,  
And dusky grey is blanch'd to bridal white;  
Then comes the sun, shines thro' the drizzling show'r,  
And the gay rainbow glows in all its colours. [*Exeunt.*]

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*ACT III. SCENE I.*

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*An Apartment in the Castle. Enter Lord HILDEBRAND  
and Saint VALORI.*

*Hildebrand.*

AH, father Carmelite! where hast thou been?  
Was it well done to leave thy wretched friend  
To be devour'd by heart-consuming anguish?

*St. Val.* I left you to repose.

*Hild.* I know it not:

Sleep is my horror; then the furies rise;  
Then pale Saint Valori appears before me:  
Trembling I wake, cold damps bedew my limbs,  
And my couch floats with tears.—Is this repose?

*St. Val.* No; yet it moves my wonder why your  
conscience,

Mute for so many years, shou'd on the sudden  
Break into voice, and cry so loud against you.—  
I found you lull'd in a luxurious calm,  
Feasting upon the spoils of him you stabb'd;  
Your castle flow'd with revelry and wine,

And you the loudest of the sons of riot :  
Where was your conscience then ?

*Hild.* With you it came ;  
You are the father of my soul's repentance :  
Your fascinating eye pervades my breast ;  
Conscious, abash'd, uncover'd to the heart,  
I stand before you—to your ear confide  
Things unreveal'd to man. Now, as I see you,  
Tho' in religion's peaceful garment cloth'd,  
Saint Valori, methinks, appears before me,  
Dreadful in arms, and braves me to the lists.

*St. Val.* Take food and rest, recruit your body's  
strength,  
And you'll forget these fears.

*Hild.* I'll die with famine  
Before I'll eat the charitable bread  
Of her I made a widow ; and for sleep,  
I tell thee once again sleep is my horror.  
Methought but now by shipwreck I was plung'd  
Into the foaming ocean ; on the shore  
Your figure stood with beck'ning hand outstretch'd  
To snatch me from the waves ; cheer'd with the sight,  
Thro' the white surf I struggled ; with strong arm  
You rais'd me from the gulph ; joyful I ran  
T' embrace my kind preserver—when at once  
Off fell your habit, bright in arms you stood,  
And with a voice of thunder cried aloud,  
' Villain, avaunt ! I am Saint Valori !'  
Then push'd me from the cliff : down, down, I fell,  
Fathoms on fathoms deep, and sunk for ever !

*St. Val.* This was your dream.

*Hild.* Now hear my waking terrors.—

Rous'd by this dream I started; to the wall  
Furious I rush'd, to dash my desperate brains :  
Burst with the force, a secret door flew open,  
Where full in view a lighted altar blaz'd  
With holy tapers bright; around it hung  
The funeral trophies of Saint Valori;  
Red gleam'd the banner of the bloody Cross,  
And on a tablet underneath was written,  
' Pray for the peace of his departed soul !'  
Upon my knees I dropt, and would have pray'd,  
When soon, behold ! the Lady Widow enter'd,  
Led by the generous youth who sav'd our lives :  
I rose, made low obeisance, and retir'd.

*St. Val.* You left them there.—Did all this pass  
in silence ?

*Hild.* All; not a word was spoken.

*St. Val.* Did you note  
Her look, her action ?—How did she dismiss you ?  
Abruptly, eagerly ?

*Hild.* With matron grace,  
Her hand thus gently waving, she dismiss'd me ;  
The other hand most lovingly was lock'd  
In his on whom she lean'd.

*St. Val.* No more of this.  
Hark ! you are summon'd——Rouse from this de-  
spair ;

Shake off your lethargy !

[*Trumpet.*

*Hild.* What trumpet's that ?



*St. Val.* To you, or to your challenger, the last ;  
Death sounds the knell, and justice seals the doom.

*Hild.* My soul sinks down abash'd : I cannot fight ;  
What wou'd you more ? I have confess'd the murder.

*St. Val.* You have confess'd you know not what :  
retire !

Go to your chamber ; I will quickly follow,  
And bring you comfort.—Nay, make no reply.  
The time is labouring, wondrous things and new  
Press to the birth ; prepare yourself to meet them.

[*Exeunt severally.*]

*Enter MATILDA and her Domestics, DE COURCI and  
his Train.*

*Mat.* My noble lord, thrice welcome ! you are come  
To glad the mourner's heart, and with your presence  
Make her poor cottage rich.

*De Cour.* Most noble lady,  
Henry of Normandy, the kingly heir  
Of England's mighty conqueror, of his grace  
And princely courtesy, by me his servant,  
As a most loving father, kindly greets you :  
Which salutation past, I am to move you  
Upon the matter of your suit afresh,  
Its weight and circumstance ; how many years  
It hath been let to sleep ? what forfeiture  
And high default you stand in, shou'd it fail :  
Conjuring you, as fits a Christian king,  
By the lov'd memory of your honour'd lord,  
Who now hath tenanted the silent grave

These twenty years and more, not to proceed  
In this high matter on surmise, or charge  
Of doubtful circumstance ; the crime alledg'd  
Being so heinous, the appeal so bloody,  
And he whom you attain so brave and noble.

*Mat.* I know, my lord, in property the law  
Can plead prescription and the time's delay ;  
But justice, in an inquisition made for blood,  
With retrospective eye thro' ages past  
Moves her own pace, nor hears the law's demur.—  
Why I have let this murder sleep thus long,  
Necessity, and not my will, must answer.  
The conqueror William, and his furious son,  
With iron hand upheld th' oppressor's power,  
And stopt their ears against the widow's cries.  
In painful silence brooding o'er my grief,  
On this lone rock, upon the ocean's brink,  
Year after year I languish'd, in my dreams  
Conversing oft with shadowy shapes and horrors,  
That scar'd me into madness.—Oh, my lord !  
Bear with my weakness : pray regard me not ;  
I have a remedy at hand—my tears. [Weeps.]

*De Cour.* Sad reliëf of the bravest, best of men,  
Tell not thy griefs to me, nor let my words  
(Which by commission, not of choice, I speak)  
Shake thy firm purpose ; for on England's throne  
No tyrant sits, deaf to the widow's cause,  
But Heav'n's vicegerent, merciful and just.  
If steadfast thou art fix'd in thy appeal,  
Stedfast in justice is thy sovereign too.

Bring forth thy knight appellant, for the lists  
Expect him, and may Heav'n defend the right!

*Mat.* Thanks to thy royal sender! on my knee  
I offer prayers to Heaven for length of days,  
And blessings shower'd on his anointed head.—  
Now, gallant lord, you shall behold my champion,  
My shepherd boy, who, like the son of Jesse,  
Unskill'd in arms, must combat this Philistine.—  
Montgomeri, come forth!

*Enter MONTGOMERI.*

*De Cour.* Is this your knight?

*Mat.* This is my knight. I trust not in the strength  
Of mortal man; Heav'n will uphold my cause,  
And to a murderer's heart will guide the blow,  
Tho' from an infant's hand.

*De Cour.* Of what degree  
Must I report him? In the royal lists  
Against so proud a name as Hildebrand,  
The warlike forms of knighthood will demand  
That noble shall to noble be oppos'd.

*Mat.* Not unprepar'd I shall attend the lists,  
And at my sovereign's feet prefer the proofs  
Which honour's forms demand.

*De Cour.* You know the peril,  
If you fall short.

*Mat.* I take it on my head.

*De Cour.* Where have you serv'd? What battles  
have you seen?

*Mont.* Few and unfortunate have been the fields

Where I have fought.—I serv'd a sinking cause ;  
Robert of Normandy was my liege lord,  
For I am Norman born.

*De Cour.* Have you been train'd  
In tournaments ?

*Mont.* I never broke a lance,  
Nor shall I, as I hope, but in his heart  
Who stabb'd Saint Valori.

*De Cour.* Noble lady,  
I wou'd impart something of nearest import  
To your more private ear.

*Mat.* Let all withdraw : *[They withdraw.]*  
Leave us.—And now, my lord and honour'd guest,  
Impart your noble thoughts ; for sure I am  
None others can be native of a soul,  
Where courtesy and valour are enshrin'd,  
As in a holy altar, under guard  
Of consecrated keepers—therefore speak.

*De Cour.* Let infamy fix on me, when I wrong  
A confidence so generous !—Heav'n bestow'd  
One friend, the pride and blessing of my life ;  
Heav'n, when you lost a husband, from me also  
Took that one friend away, and in his grave  
Buried my heart beside him.

*Mat.* Yes, my lord,  
We both have cause to mourn him : I remember  
The day he parted for the Holy Wars,  
His manly bosom struggling to repress  
Its bursting passion, in those racking moments,  
When stern religion rent him from my arms,

Then, even then, in his capacious soul  
 Friendship had part—you shar'd it with Matilda.  
 Need I proceed? ah, no! for you was present,  
 You took him from me, on your neck he fell;  
 I parted, sunk, and never saw him more.

*De Cour.* 'Twas in those parting moments he committed

A sacred charge, the very test of friendship,  
 Your soft unshelter'd beauty to my care.  
 I serv'd, consol'd you, lov'd you as a brother;  
 But soon Saint Valori call'd me from my charge,  
 For war and sickness had consum'd our host,  
 And Palestine was drench'd with Christian blood.—  
 We fought, we conquer'd, and from Pagan hands  
 Rescu'd the captive Cross: and now command  
 My zealous heart, you are its mistress still.

*Mat.* There needs not this, my lord; for I can read  
 Your zeal without a preface: freely then,  
 As a friend shou'd, and plainly speak your thoughts.

*De Cour.* When rumour of this combat reach'd my  
 ears,

Without delay I sent a trusty page,  
 Offering myself as your devoted knight:  
 He brought for answer, that you had a champion;  
 You thank'd me for my offer;—cold repulse  
 Temper'd in courteous phrase! still I submitted  
 In silence, as became me, to your pleasure,  
 Musing who this might be—

*Mat.* And now you find him

E ij

A stripling youth unknown, in arms a novice,  
And you condemn my choice; these are your thoughts.

*De Cour.* I do confess it.—Oh, reflect in time!  
Think not because nature hath cast a form  
In fair proportion, strung his youthful joints  
With nerves that bear him bounding to the chase,  
Or hurl the wrestler in the shouting ring,  
That you have train'd a champion to encounter  
A combatant so practis'd in the lists,  
So valorous in fight as Hildebrand.

*Mat.* What I have done, I've done: your zeal, my  
lord,  
May start new terrors for my hero's danger,  
Shake me with new alarms, but change it cannot.

*De Cour.* Turn not away, but still with patience  
hear me.  
Think what you are, great in yourself, yet greater  
As brave Saint Valori's widow: oh, preserve  
That name untainted; hear what honour counsels;  
Truth makes me bold, your danger is my warrant.

*Mat.* You was my husband's friend; I own your  
plea.  
Lo! I am turn'd to hear: proceed.

*De Cour.* I was his friend,  
I am yours also; and as such I warn you  
Against a deed so fatal, that the steel  
Of Hildebrand gave not a stab more mortal  
To life than this to fame.

*Mat.* My lord, my lord!  
You rise too fast upon me, and advance

Too strongly on so weak a disputant,  
So much to seek for reason as I am.

*De Cour.* May I not then demand, what is this boy,  
Whom you thus dignify? this page, this lacquey,  
The very topmost pitch of whose promotion  
Had been to touch the stirrup of Saint Valori?

*Mat.* What is he!—but you question me too  
harshly;

I'll answer to the king; but to a friend  
Who treats me with suspicion, I am silent.  
You bid me call to memory what I am:  
I hope, when thus you school me, you yourself  
In your own precepts need no monitor.  
I think I am as humble as I shou'd be  
Under such hard correction. I acknowledge  
Two powerful duties: to my husband one,  
The first and strongest; to yourself the next,  
As my much-honour'd guest; but I oppose  
The tyranny of friendship, which would stamp  
Dishonour on the worthy, and forbid  
My free affections to direct their choice  
Where nature warrants, and my soul approves. [*Exit.*]

*De Cour.* [*Alone.*] Why then there's no perfection  
in the sex,

Or I had found it here. Farewell to grief;  
So much for tears! tho' twenty years they flow,  
They wear no channels in a widow's cheeks;  
And still the ambush'd smile lurks underneath  
The watery surface, ready to start up

At the next lover's summons ; now to greet  
A hero's passion, now to wed a page.

*Enter Saint VALORI.*

*St. Val.* My Lord De Courci, doth your memory  
serve

To recollect a certain pledge of love,  
A jewel, which the lady of this house  
Gave to her husband by your hands ?

*De Cour.* A bracelet ;  
She took it from her arm when they did part :  
I well remember it.

*St. Val.* Was it like this ?

*De Cour.* The very same ; I gave it to Saint Valori  
When he embark'd for Palestine.

*St. Val.* You did :  
I had it then ; your memory is perfect.

*De Cour.* You had it then !—What must I think of  
this ?

*St. Val.* Can you this little token keep in mind,  
And not remember him you gave it to ?

*De Cour.* Explain yourself ; you speak in mysteries.

*St. Val.* Be temperate then ; let not your loud sur-  
prise

Betray me to the house : I'm here unknown.

*De Cour.* Impossible ! tho' the dead rose again,  
Yet this can not be he.

*St. Val.* My friend ! my friend !  
Come to my arms ! let this embrace convince you.

*De Cour.* Oh earth and heaven ! he lives.



*St. Val.* He lives indeed  
To a new life of misery. Be still!  
Forbear to question me : another time  
Thou shalt hear all, but let this hour be sacred  
To friendship's pressing call.—My wife! my wife!

*De Cour.* Oh, my prophetic fears!

*St. Val.* Unhappy woman!  
For why shou'd I accuse her? twenty years  
A mournful widow, and at last to start  
So wide from all propriety; and now,  
After so brave a struggle, now to sink  
Her honour, which still bore so proud a sail  
Thro' the rough tide of time : oh bitter thought!  
Oh aggravating shame!

*De Cour.* Alas, my friend,  
How shall I comfort you? I see you point  
At young Montgomeri: in friendship's right  
I ask'd her private ear, and boldly urg'd  
The peril of her fame.

*St. Val.* And what reply?

*De Cour.* Patient at first she heard; but when I  
touch'd  
The master-string, and set to view how base,  
The choice of such a minion, such a page,  
Then—but 'twere painful to describe the scene,  
Vain to conceal: she loves him to distraction.

*St. Val.* Can it be doubted? She has married  
him.

*De Cour.* Indeed!

*St. Val.* I have a trusty servant here,

Who saw her clasp him in her wanton arms,  
Twine, like pale ivy round the polish'd bark  
Of the smooth beech, whilst rapt'rous she exclaim'd,  
'My hero! my Saint Valori! my husband!'  
Oh, she is lost, beyond redemption lost!

*De Cour.* Who now shall dream of constancy in  
woman?

What's to be done?—Your life dissolves the combat.

*St. Val.* That shame I've sav'd her from: Lord  
Hildebrand

Is dying in this house.

*De Cour.* Lord Hildebrand!

How many strange events are here combin'd  
Of sorrow and surprise! so thick they crowd,  
So swift they change, I know not where to turn,  
Nor what to counsel.

*St. Val.* What can counsel give?

Can words revoke, can wisdom reconcile,  
Th' indissoluble web which fate has wove?  
And shall I stay and harbour here with shame?  
Walk, like a discontented moping ghost,  
To haunt and hover round their nuptial bed,  
When I can die, as I have liv'd, in arms?—  
Off, holy counterfeit! begone, disguise!

*De Cour.* Stop, I conjure you: rush not on despair.

*St. Val.* Despair!—And have I worn the Cross so  
long

But as the mask and mockery of religion?  
No, 'tis the armour of a Christian knight,  
And with this gauntlet I defy despair.

*De Cour.* Then by that sacred symbol, by our  
friendship

And faithful brotherhood in God's holy service,  
I do beseech thee to persist in hope :  
For whilst one circumstance of doubt remains,  
One, tho' the slightest fragment is afloat,  
That fond credulity ere clung to, still,  
Still will I keep some happy chance in view  
To save thy lady's honour.

*St. Val.* Gallant friend,  
Thy counsel shall prevail, I will persist ;  
And as misfortune is the world's best school  
For true philosophy, I will extract  
The cordial patience from the bitter root  
Of this implanted pain. Come, brave *De Courci* !  
Pleasure's gay scene, and hope's delusive dream,  
Are vanish'd, lost ; love's fairy palace sinks  
In the false fleeting sand on which 'twas built ;  
Whilst thy immortal constancy alone  
Stands in the waste, a solitary column,  
To tell life's mournful traveller where once  
Joy revell'd, and a stately fabric rose. *Exeunt.*

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ACT IV. SCENE I.

*Enter MATILDA and Lord HILDEBRAND.*

*Matilda.*

STOP, stranger! wherefore have you left your chamber?

Will you go forth with all your wounds about you?

Return, nor rashly counteract our care,

That labours to preserve you.

*Hild.* Shall I make

Your house a grave? The wounds you see are nothing,

Their pain may be assuag'd by drugs and ointments;

Nature abounds in simples, that can heal

These tumours of the body.

*Mat.* If the cure

Be, as you say, so easy, why oppose it?

Is pain your choice, that you resist our medicines,

And thus expose your rankling wounds undrest

To the raw fest'ring air?

*Hild.* Ah, generous lady!

'Tis but a superficial flattering art

To heal the skin, and make the surface whole,

When an unsearchable and mortal sting

Has pierc'd the nobler part.

*Mat.* That sting is grief:

You mourn a wife, perhaps, or some dear friend,

In your late shipwreck lost: if it be so,

I'll not arraign your sorrow; yet remember,

Tho' short of their allotted time they fell,  
'Twas Heav'n that struck them short ; they were not  
murder'd,

As my Saint Valori, by vile, treach'rous man.

*Hild.* Oh, horror ! horror !

*Mat.* Have I touch'd the cause ?

Was there a friend ? a wife ?

*Hild.* Nor wife, nor friend :

And yet——

*Mat.* What yet ? Your heart perhaps was fix'd  
Upon your freighted treasures, hoarded up  
By carking care, and a long life of thrift,  
Now without interest or redemption swallow'd  
By the devouring bankrupt waves for ever :  
What then ? your cares have perish'd with your fortune.

*Hild.* The wreck of friends and fortune I bewail  
As things Heav'n gives and takes away at pleasure ;  
Conditional enjoyments, transient loans,  
Bliss that accumulates a debt of pain :  
Swift their succession, sudden their reverse.  
To-day the setting sun descends in tears,  
To-morrow's dawn breaks forth, and all is joy :  
But guilt involves me in perpetual night ;  
No morning star, no glimmering ray of hope ;  
Eternal tossings on a bed of thorns,  
Conscience, that raven, knelling in my ear,  
And vulture furies plucking at my heart !

*Mat.* Then I conjectur'd right, and 'tis remorse  
Which tortures you ; I read it in your eyes.

Did that descending virtue come on earth,  
To set at large the captive or the free ?  
'Twas to redeem the captive : turn to him,  
Turn then, and seek your saving hope, repentance ;  
Go to your Carmelite, confess to him,  
Fly to your soul's physician for a cure ;  
Whether with soft emollients he assuage,  
Or with corrosive penances consume  
The cank'rous gangrene that now gnaws your heart.

*Hild.* I have confess'd to him, he knows my guilt ;  
But what can he, alas ! there lives but one  
Under Heav'n's canopy, who can absolve.——  
Hither th' immediate hand of Heav'n has led me,  
Hopeless of pardon, to expire before you,  
And cast your husband's murderer at your feet.

*Mat.* Ah, scorpion ! is it thou ? I shake with horror.——

Thee have I pitied ? thee have I preserv'd ?——  
Monster, avaunt ! Go to the rocks for food,  
Call to the winds for pity ! lay thee down  
Beneath some blighted yew, whose pois'nous leaf  
Kills as it falls ; there howl thyself to death !——  
Hangs the roof o'er us yet ? I am astonish'd.——  
Art not asham'd, O earth, to bear him yet ?  
O sea, to cast him up again ?——Begone !

*Hild.* I do not wait for pardon, but for death :  
Call to your servants ; overwhelm me with their swords.  
Heav'n throws me on your mercy ; you receiv'd  
And gave me shelter ; hospitably tender'd  
Food and restoring med'cines ; I refus'd them :

My thirst is unallay'd, my wounds undrest,  
No particle of food has past my lips,  
For I disdain a fraud upon your pity;  
And, where I can't have pardon, scorn support.  
The only mercy I implore is death.

*Mat.* Mercy! and dare thy tongue pronounce the  
name? ———

Mercy! thou man of blood, thou hast destroy'd it.  
It came from Heaven to save Saint Valori:  
You saw the cherub messenger alight  
From its descent; with outspread wings it sate,  
Covering his breast; you drew your cursed steel,  
And thro' the pleading angel pierc'd his heart.  
Then, then the moon, by whose pale light you struck,  
Turn'd fiery red, and from her angry orb  
Darted contagious sickness on the earth;  
The planets in their courses shriek'd for horror;  
Heav'n dropt maternal tears.—Oh! art thou come?

*Enter MONTGOMERI.*

*Mont.* Why dost thou tremble? Why this ghastly  
terror?

*Mat.* Save me, support me! In thy arms I fall:  
I mov'd not till thou cam'st, lest I had sunk  
Upon the floor, and catching at the hand  
That stabb'd Saint Valori, his touch had kill'd me.

*Mont.* That stabb'd Saint Valori! Is this the wretch?  
Is Hildebrand before me?—Draw, thou traitor!  
Stand to defence, or die!

*Hild.* Behold my heart!  
Strike! I expect no mercy.

*Mat.* Stop thine hand:  
Black tho' he be, as infamy can make him,  
He is defenceless, wounded, and expiring.

*Hild.* Wilt thou not add, repentant?—I am van-  
quish'd,

Body and soul laid prostrate by despair.  
I do confess my crime: what can I more?  
Castle, demesne, and treasure, all the spoils  
Of my accursed avarice, I resign:  
Take my life too; dismiss me from a world  
Where I have none to mourn me, no kind hand  
To close my eyes; of children, wife, and friends,  
(Save only this poor Carmelite) bereft;  
Be merciful to him, he is not guilty.  
If I dare ask a little earth to cover me  
For Christian decency, I would—but that,  
That were too much—my tears will sink a grave.

*Mont.* He's deeply penitent: you'll not refuse  
What he petitions for: 'twere most unchristian  
To let him die without the church's rites.

*Mat.* Forbear!

*Mont.* He's dying—see, he faints—he falls.

[*Hildebrand sinks on the ground.*]

'Twill give him comfort in the hour of death;  
And that I'd give ev'n to a murderer.

*Mat.* You never knew your father, and in you  
Pity is natural; in me 'tis treason

---



To breathe the air which his pollution taints ;  
A crime to look upon his eyes and live.

*Mont.* I feel, I feel your cause ; there let him fall :  
Die where he lists, but give his corpse a grave.—  
And see, the Carmelite approaches.

*Mat.* Hah !  
The Lord De Courci too !—Stand by the body ;  
And if the wretch has breath to speak again,  
Call them to witness his confession. Mark !  
In Heav'n's own presence, mark this awful scene,  
And write it on thy heart !—Farewell ! Be constant !  
[ *Exit Matilda.*

*Enter SAINT VALORI and DE COURCI.*

*Mont.* Noble De Courci, and thou reverend father,  
From whom the penitent in life's last hour  
Draws holy comfort, look upon that wretch,  
Visit his soul with peace at its departure,  
And take confession from his dying lips.

*St. Val.* Withdraw, and stand apart then out of  
hearing. [ *They withdraw.*  
Lord Hildebrand, if thou hast sense and motion,  
Reach forth thine hand !—So ! If thou canst, look  
up !

I am the Carmelite.

*Hild.* Oh, save me, save me !  
I am a sinful man.

*St. Val.* But not a murderer :  
He who speaks to you is Saint Valori.

F ij

*Hild.* God of my hope! is it some blessed spirit,  
Or living man that speaks?

*St. Val.* A living man,  
Saint Valori, himself; no spirit.—Mark!  
I grasp your hand in token of forgiveness:  
Dost thou perceive it?

*Hild.* At my heart I feel it.—  
Can you forgive me? May I die in peace?

*St. Val.* Lo! thus with friendly hand I close thine  
eyes:

Sleep, sleep! and be at rest from thy afflictions;  
Wou'd mine were laid beside thee in the grave!

*Hild.* Oh, balmy comfort! oh, how sweet to die!—  
Farewell for ever: do not quit my hand;  
Let it not go, till I am dead.—Farewell! [*Dies.*

*St. Val.* He's dead;—his soul forsook him with that  
sigh.

Now, sirs, return—'tis past; I have beheld  
Religion's triumph, a repentant death.

*Re-enter DE COURCI and MONTGOMERI.*

Call to your servants, and remove the body.

*Mont.* There is a charitable house hard by,  
Where on the ocean's edge a few poor monks,  
A slender brotherhood of Mercy, dwell;  
For human misery is a small asylum;  
There often from the foundering bark escap'd,  
The houseless wretch finds shelter, and his wounds,  
With balsams by the fathers cull'd, are dress'd:  
There we'll entomb the body.

*St. Val.* Be it so !

*Mont.* You now alone survive the morning's wreck :  
You by peculiar providence are sav'd  
From a devoted vessel, which the sins  
Of its dire owner sunk ; still I must wonder  
How God's own servant with a dæmon leagu'd,  
And piety with murder cou'd embark.

*St. Val.* You think he was a murderer ; have a care  
How you incline too rashly to such tales.  
Let not your vassals triumph and rejoice  
Too much o' th' sudden ; let your castle keep  
Some remnant of its old propriety :  
And you, the champion, hang not up your lance  
In token of a bloodless victory,  
But keep it sharpen'd for a fresh encounter ;  
And stick your valour to the test, young knight,  
Lest haply some new questioner should come,  
And dash your feast with horror.

*Mont.* Reverend stranger,  
It will become your order to desist  
From threats, which cover some mysterious meaning,  
And speak without disguise. You boast yourself  
Noble Saint Valori's friend, yet plead the cause  
Of Hildebrand, defend him from the crime  
Of murder, and with gloomy menace bid me  
Expect some new appellant.—Lo ! I'm ready.

*St. Val.* Away, vain boy, away !

*Mont.* Vain let me be,  
Not of myself, but of the cause I stand for ;  
The lady of Saint Valori accounts me

Worthy to be her champion, by that title  
I do impeach the memory of Lord Hildebrand ;  
And in the presence of this lord, whose person  
Stands for the king, arraign him as a murderer :  
If any loves his memory so well .  
As to adopt his cause, let him stand forth,  
I pledge myself to answer.

*St. Val.* Lord De Courci,  
Shall I reveal myself ? I'm strongly tempted. [*Aside.*  
*De Cour.* I do protest against it ; and conjure you,  
Whilst he is thus in train, leave it to me  
To draw confession up.

*St. Val.* I am content.

*De Cour.* Montgomeri, in virtue of my charge  
I've noted your defiance : should there come  
A knight of known degree to challenge it,  
Say, by what stile and title wilt thou answer ?

*Mont.* Ask that of her in whose defence I stand.

*De Cour.* We know thee for her champion ; but  
declare,  
Hast thou no nearer name, no closer tie ?

*St. Val.* Answer to that.—'Tis palpable, 'tis gross :  
Your silence is confession.

*Mont.* Ah, good father,  
Have you so us'd confession as an engine  
To twist and torture silence to your purpose,  
And stain the truth with colouring not its own ?

*St. Val.* The man who flies to silence for evasion,  
When plainly question'd, aims at a deception  
Which candour's self will construe to condemn him.

*Mont.* Thyself a stranger, dark, inscrutable,  
With Hildebrand associate, thou to question me !—  
First answer for thyself.

*St. Val.* For myself then——

*De Cour.* Stop, recollect your thoughts !

*St. Val.* Thanks, noble lord !—

For myself, then, I own I am your debtor  
For no less gift than life ; and tho' that life  
Makes what you gave a gift of misery,  
Yet is the gift uncancell'd.

*Mont.* Set it down

For nothing but the mutual debt of nature,  
Common from man to man.—To-morrow's sun,  
With favouring winds to aid us, shall transport  
This castle's noble mistress and myself  
Across the streight that severs this fair isle  
From its maternal shore ; there to renew  
At Henry's feet, against this bloody man  
Newly deceas'd, our criminal appeal,  
Arraigning him for murder.

*St. Val.* Hah ! beware !

*Mont.* Who shall oppose it ?

*St. Val.* I ; this noble witness !

Truth, and the living evidence of sight.

*Mont.* To you, my Lord De Courci, not to him,  
Who is a son of peace ; to you, a knight  
Seal'd with the Cross, and militant for truth,  
Thus I appeal.—What say you to our charge ?

*De Cour.* False, false ; I pledge my life upon the  
proof.

*Mont.* Hah ! by my father's soul, if thou shalt dare  
To whisper that to-morrow—

*De Cour.* If I dare

/ To whisper it !—My herald shall proclaim it ;  
I'll cry it in the lists.—There is my gauntlet.

[*Throws it down.*

*St. Val.* Hold, I forbid it—

[*Takes up De Courci's gauntlet.*

Brother of the Cross,

Upon your knightly honour I conjure you

Put up your gauntlet : I revoke the combat.—

Hear me, young sir, you tread upon your grave ;

Fate waves the sword of vengeance o'er your head ;

I've pass'd it by, and paid you life for life.

Lo ! I provoke you to a gentler combat ;

Behold my peaceful gauntlet !—Take this jewel,

[*Gives the bracelet.*

And an hour hence, when I am on my way,

Shew it to her (what shall I call your lady ?)

To her that own'd it once.

*Mont.* I will obey you.

What more have you in mind ?

*St. Val.* Tell her the monk,

Thro' all his pilgrimage from Holy Land

Preserv'd it sacred ; journeying night and day,

By sea, by land, in shipwreck, in the waves,

Still guarded it with reverence more devout

Than holy relicks of departed martyrs.

Now 'tis no longer worth : 'tis hers, 'tis yours,

'Tis the next favourite's prize, a transient bauble,

The fleeting emblem of a woman's love.—

No more: farewell!—Come, gallant lord, to horse!

[*Exit with De Courci.*

*Mont.* To horse! why so a warrior would have  
call'd;

With such a step a warrior would have trod:

A monk!—Mysterious man! I'll not believe it.

This jewel may unfold the labyrinth—

What then? shall I commit the clue

To sorrow's trembling hand, or firmly hold it

Till more shall be discover'd?—Time direct me!

[*Exit.*

*ACT V. SCENE I.*

*A Chapel with an Altar decorated with the funeral Trophies of SAINT VALORI. MATILDA is discovered kneeling at the Altar. MONTGOMERI enters, and, after a Pause, speaks.*

*Montgomeri.*

STILL at the altar! Ever on her knees—

Nothing but peace! peace to her husband's soul!

Perpetual requiems.—If, as we believe,

Th' uncircumscribed spirit of a man

Walks after death, till it can find a grave,

Or holy church, with soul-compelling hymns,

Shall chant it to repose, I am amaz'd

My father's ghost, whilst unappeas'd by prayer,  
Ne'er took it's shadowy journey to this spot.  
Why, when De Courci and the monk outfac'd me,  
Did he not then arise with all his wounds,  
And scare them to confession ? I am lost,  
Bewilder'd, and perplex'd ! But see ! she moves—

[*Matilda arises, and comes down from the altar to*  
*Montgomeri.*

*Mat.* My son ! my joy ! my blessing !

*Mont.* Whence is this ?

What sudden transformation ? By my hopes,  
There is a joyful emanation round thee,  
That strikes a gleam of rapture to my heart.—  
What angel of good tidings hath been with thee ?  
Who hath exorcis'd thy despair, and breath'd  
This beam of placid pleasure in thine eyes ?

*Mat.* Thy father hath been with me.

*Mont.* Heav'ns ! my father !

*Mat.* I've seen him in my vision ; commun'd with  
him

Before the altar : soft his accents fell,  
Like voices of departed friends heard in our dreams,  
Or music in the air, when the night-spirits  
Warble their magic minstrelsy.

*Mont.* Indeed !

Wou'd I had seen him too !

*Mat.* Wou'd to Heav'n thou hadst !

*Mont.* What was his form ?

*Mat.* Majestically sweet



He smil'd upon me ; strait thro' all my veins]  
Methought I felt a thrilling virtue run,  
Healing, where'er it cours'd, both heart and brain.

*Mont.* Saw you no wounds about him ?

*Mat.* None, no wounds ;  
Nor was he in his youth, as when he died,  
But grey with years, and much transform'd by time :  
At first I knew him not, and as he spoke  
So chang'd methought he was, with pain I trac'd  
The faded record.

*Mont.* Spoke he of murder ?

*Mat.* Oh ! not a word ; but as it ne'er had been,  
And he were living now, so look'd and spoke.

*Mont.* 'Tis strange !—One question more—Say, did  
this form

Ne'er visit you before ?

*Mat.* Never, till now.

*Mont.* Nor this, nor any other shape ?

*Mat.* Oh ! never, never.

*Mont.* Then, then I own my confidence is shaken ;  
And fit it is no longer to conceal  
What I have newly heard so boldly vouch'd,  
That my faith reels.

*Mat.* Speak, I conjure thee, speak !

*Mont.* I came this instant from the Carmelite  
And Lord De Courci : on the floor was stretch'd  
The breathless corpse of Hildebrand ; the monk  
In his last moments had been private with him :  
I urg'd the murder, to his own confession  
Appealing in my accusation's proof ;

When, strange to tell ! his confessor the monk  
Boldly denied that he had kill'd Saint Valori.  
Rous'd at this daring insult, and indignant,  
I turn'd upon De Courci, and demanded  
If he wou'd vouch the falsehood : he, more hot  
And no less confident than t' other, hurl'd  
Defiance in my teeth, and to the ground  
Threw down his gauntlet, pledging to the truth  
Of what the monk affirm'd.

*Mat.* I am amaz'd ;  
There is a trembling expectation in me,  
That by some secret impulse draws me on  
To the great revelation of my fate :  
Therefore, proceed !

*Mont.* Before I could reply,  
The Carmelite had seiz'd De Courci's pledge,  
And with a tone and gesture more beseeching  
A haughty warrior than a son of peace,  
Sternly forbade the challenge to proceed :  
Then with a mournful action turning tow'rds me,  
And sighing, drew from forth his bosom this,  
This pearly chain. *[Produces the bracelet.]*

*Mat.* Ah !—Do my eyes betray me ?—  
Help, help ! uphold me, whilst I look upon it.—  
The same ; the same ! I gave it to my husband ;  
My last, fond, parting pledge : guide, guide my  
    hands,  
My trembling hands to touch it.—Sacred relic !  
Enthusiastic as the pilgrim's kiss,  
Thus to my lips I press thee. Hail, thrice hail !—

To thee, O altar, with these banners deck'd,  
Hallow'd with daily incense, and besieg'd  
With never-ceasing requiems for his soul,  
I dedicate this trophy of my love!—

Lead me, my son!

*Mont.* Oh! dost thou love thy son?

*Mat.* Love thee! O Heaven!

[*Falls on his neck weeping.*]

*Mont.* By that then I conjure thee.

Come to thy couch! Now, as thy cheek turns pale,  
Convulsion shakes thy lip, and the full stream  
Bursts from thine eyes, return not to the altar:  
Let me conduct thee forth.

*Mat.* Where, where's the monk?

Shall I not see him?

*Mont.* Yes, thou suffering saint!

Be patient for a while, and thou shalt see him.

*Mat.* Come then, dispose of me as to thy love  
And piety seems best: I will obey.

Let me have this—Thou wilt not take this from me.

[*Holding the bracelet.*]

*Mont.* Not for the worth of all this world.

*Mat.* I thank thee.

[*Exeunt.*]

*Enter SAINT VALORI, DE COURCI, and GYFFORD.*

*St. Val.* Suffer this last one weakness.—Hah! she's  
gone;

The chapel is deserted: I had hop'd  
Once more to have look'd upon her ere we parted,

*De Cour.* 'Tis better as it is.

*St. Val.* It may be so;  
And yet 'twere stern philosophy, methinks,  
That could refuse the sight one short indulgence,  
Ere the heart breaks with sorrow.

*De Cour.* I am pain'd  
To see this tender sorrow swell so fast.

*St. Val.* Oh! call to mind how I have lov'd this  
woman!

Gyfford, thou know'st it: say, thou faithful servant,  
What was my passion; how did absence feed it?  
But how canst thou compute my sum of sorrows?  
Years upon years have roll'd since thou wast with me;  
Time hath been wearied with my groans, my tears  
Have damp'd his wings, till he scarce crept along;  
The unpitying sun ne'er wink'd upon my toils;  
All day I dragg'd my slavery's chain, all night  
Howl'd to its clanking on my bed of straw;  
And yet these pains were recreation now,  
To those I feel, whilst I resign Matilda.

*Gyf.* Stay then, my noble master, here abide,  
And to this awful place convoke your lady.

*St. Val.* This awful place! she'll visit it no more;  
Or, if she does, 'twill be to strip these trappings;  
These mockeries shall come down, they've had their  
day,

They've serv'd the uses of hypocrisy,  
And festive garlands now shall fill their place  
Around this nuptial altar.

*De Cour.* No, my friend,  
I am a witness to her unfeign'd sorrows;

And were I left to judge of them unbiass'd  
By what I saw besides, I should believe  
She were the very mirror of her sex  
For matchless constancy.

*St. Val.* You rend my heart.

*Gyf.* Thrice on her knees this morning hath she  
wash'd

This altar's feet with tears, and with her prayers  
Sent up a mingled cry of sighs and groans.

*St. Val.* Why then, old man, didst thou distract  
my soul

With gossip tales to slander her fair fame,  
And murder my repose? If thou art conscious  
Of having wrong'd her, get thee hence, begone!  
Fall at her feet for pardon, howl for pity,  
And hide thyself where light may never find thee.

*Gyf.* With grief, but not with shame, I will retire  
From thee and light.—I have not wrong'd the truth.

*St. Val.* Stay, Gyfford, stay, thou loyal, good old  
man!

Pity thy master, and forgive my phrenzy.  
Lo! I am calm again: the pledge I've given  
To young Montgomeri shall be the test:  
Yes, with that chain I'll draw her to the proof;  
Link'd and entwin'd about her heart I'll hold it,  
And tent her nature to its inmost feelings.—  
See, the young favourite comes!

*Enter MONTGOMERI.*

*Mont.* Oh! timely found,  
Gij

Well are you thus encounter'd, holy sir !  
The lady of Saint Valori demands you ;  
And lo ! where she advances,

*Enter MATILDA.*

*Mat.* Hah ! 'tis well.

In presence of this altar we are met :  
And may the sacred genius of the place  
Prosper our interview !

*St. Val.* Amen ! amen !

*Mat.* Good friends, withdraw ! let none approach  
the chapel

Whilst we are private.—Now be firm, my heart !

*[They go out—she pauses some time, and then addresses herself to Saint Valori.]*

Father, I thank you !—I've receiv'd your pledge,  
The small, but prizeless relic you have brought me.  
The bracelet, given by Lord De Courci's hands  
In times long past (fie, fie upon these tears,  
They will have way ! ) to a departed friend.  
Perhaps he priz'd this trifle—but alas !  
'Tis fated, like the arm from which 'twas taken,  
Never to clasp him more.

*St. Val.* Alas ! I fear it.

*Mat.* I hope De Courci gave it to my lord.

*St. Val.* He did : I saw him give it.

*Mat.* Hah ! you saw him !

*St. Val.* When he embark'd for Palestine ; I've  
told you

We never march'd apart. I wore the Cross  
In those fame-seeking days.

*Mat.* I do remember.—

And this poor favour, did my hero wear it ?

*St. Val.* Devoutly, at his heart.

*Mat.* Then, then indeed

Thou hast bestow'd a treasure.—Welcome, welcome !

[*As she is pressing it to her heart, St. Valori, observing her agitation, runs to her assistance.*]

*St. Val.* He wore it like an amulet ; with this  
Before his heart, first thro' the yawning breach  
Thy sacred walls, Jerusalem, he storm'd ;  
Tore down the moony standard, where it hung  
In impious triumph ; thrice their Pagan swords  
Shiver'd his mailed crest, as many times  
That sacred amulet was dy'd in blood  
Nearest his heart.

*Mat.* Stop there ! I charge thee, stop !  
Tell me no more : oh, follow him no further,  
For see, th' accursed Pyreneans rise,  
Streaming with blood ; there hellish murder howls ;  
There madness rages, and with haggard eyes  
Glares in the craggy pass !—She'll spring upon me  
If I advance. Oh, shield me from the sight !

*St. Val.* Be calm, collect thyself : it was not there,  
It was not there Saint Valori met his death.  
'Twas not the sword of Hildebrand that slew him ;  
Tho' pierc'd with wounds, that ambush he surviv'd.

*Mat.* What do I hear ? Oh, look upon this altar !  
Think where you stand, and do not wrong the truth.

*St. Val.* He, who is truth itself, be witness for me!  
Deep was the stroke that dire assassin gave,  
Yet short of life it stopt; unhors'd and fall'n,  
Welt'ring in blood, your wounded husband lay,  
'Till haply found by charitable strangers  
Journeying to Venice, he was heal'd, restor'd;  
And, thence embarking, by a barbarous rover  
Was captur'd.—Start not; but repress your terrors.

*Mat.* Admire not that I tremble; marvel rather  
That I hear this and live.—Saint Valori captur'd!  
The bravest captain of the Cross enslav'd  
By barbarous Pagans!

*St. Val.* Tedious years he suffer'd  
Of hard captivity——

*Mat.* Oh, where, ye heavens!  
Where was your justice then?—And died he there?

*St. Val.* 'Twas not his lot to find a distant grave.

*Mat.* Where, where?—Oh, speak! release me from  
the rack!——

Where did my hero fall?

*St. Val.* Where did he fall!——

Nor Pagan swords, nor slavery's galling chain,  
Nor murderers' daggers, Afric's burning clime,  
Toils, storms, nor shipwreck, kill'd him—here he  
fell!

Grief burst his heart—here in this spot he fell!

[*He falls to the ground.*]

*Mat.* Ah, horror, horror!——Help, for mercy,  
help!

My son, my son! your father lies before you.

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MONTGOMERI runs in, followed by DE COURCI and GYFFORD.

Mont. My father! Heav'n and earth! Oh, save him; save him!

Where shall I turn? See, see! she faints, she falls!

[Supports her in his arms.]

De Cour. He is her son. Awake, look up, my friend! Live, live! De Courci bids Saint Valori live. Your rival is your son.

[Saint Valori raising himself on his knee, unsheaths his dagger.]

St. Val. Off! give me way:  
I'll kill him in her arms.

De Cour. He is your son—  
Hear me, thou frantic father! I, De Courci,  
I speak to you.—Would you destroy your son?

St. Val. Bind up his wounds. Oh, if I've slain  
my son,  
Perdition will not own me!

Mont. He revives.

Nature awakens reason.—Hush! be still.  
She stirs.—Withhold him from her arms awhile;  
Let all be silence, whilst disposing Heaven,  
That showers this joy, shall fit them to receive it.

Mat. How could you say my husband is alive?  
Which of you keeps him from me?—Oh! 'tis cruel!

St. Val. Uncase me of my weeds; tear off my cowl!  
Now, now she'll know me; now I am Saint Valori.

[Throws off his habit, and appears in armour.]

*Mat.* Stand off! Oh, blessed light of Heav'n, shine forth!

Visit my aching eyes; ye solar beams,  
And let me see my hero!—Hah! the Cross—  
He gleams—he glimmers;—like a mist he rises.—  
He lives! he lives! I clasp him in my arms.  
My lost Saint Valeri! my long-lost husband!

*[Runs into his arms.]*

*St. Val.* Oh, my heart's joy! do I again embrace thee?

Soul of all honour, constancy, and truth!

*Mat.* This transport is too quick, it melts my brain;  
The sky runs round; the earth is all in motion;  
Nay, now it whirls too fast.

*St. Val.* Ye saints in bliss!  
Heroic matrons! Ye angelic virtues,  
Protect your fair resemblance!—Hah! she weeps!—  
Kind tears, I thank you! Nature's soft relief,  
Waters, that from the soul's full fount run o'er,  
To joy or grief welcome alike ye flow,  
Assist our patience, and assuage our pain.

*Mat.* Alas! alas! that I shou'd know thee not.—  
What ravages have time and sorrow made  
In Heav'n's most perfect work, the fairest temple  
Nature e'er rear'd in majesty and grace!

*St. Val.* What dire calamity have we escap'd!  
Now 'tis dispers'd, the mists of doubt are fled;  
Truth, like the sun, breaks forth, and all is joy.—  
My son! my son! Oh, throw my arms about him,  
And let me cling for ever to his neck!

*Mont.* Oh sympathetic energy of nature !  
This morn a nameless orphan, now the son  
Of living parents : he for virtue fam'd,  
For dignity of soul, and matchless courage ;  
She for affection, constancy renown'd,  
Inspir'd with truth, with every grace adorn'd,  
A woman's fondness, and an angel's face.

*Mat.* Heaven hear my praises ! echo them, O earth !  
Cherubs, that come with healing on your wings,  
Waft my thanksgiving back !——Bright beam of  
mercy !

Visit the inmost chambers of my heart ;  
And where grief rear'd a husband's monument  
Fix now his living image : there, as time  
Shook not the faithful witness from my soul,  
When grief assail'd it, so in joy support me,  
And guard my constancy in both extremes.

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

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## EPILOGUE.

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BY THE AUTHOR.

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Spoken by Mrs. Siddons.

*LADIES, we now have shewn a faithful wife,  
And trust our scene prevails in real life;  
We hope that nuptial truth's your reigning passion,  
If not—why let the stage begin the fashion :  
'Tis ours to paint you innocent and true ;  
To be what we describe depends on you.—  
Two tragic masters grac'd th' Athenian stage,  
One sketch'd with candour, t'other dash'd with rage :  
Old Sophocles's dames were heavenly creatures,  
His rival drew them all in fury features ;  
Both err'd, perhaps.—The milder urg'd this plea,  
“ I paint my women as they ought to be :”  
The angry bard, relentless to the Fair,  
Sternly replied, “ I paint mine as they are.”*

*Our Author (pardon if he brings his name  
Too near to those of an immortal fame)  
At humble distance takes the milder plan,  
Less proud to be a poet than a man :  
Scorns first to forge and then enforce a crime,  
Or polish libels into truth by rhyme.*

---

*If you have faults, alas! he bids me say,  
Oh! that his wish cou'd charm them all away!  
For if no cure but caustics can be found,  
He will not make a sore to heal a wound;  
If you have faults, they're faults he won't discover,  
To your own sex he begs to bind you over.  
So many ladies now there are who write,  
You'll hear of all your trips some winter's night:  
Since Pegasus has learn'd the jadish trick  
To bear a side-saddle, you'll find him kick.*

*But let no satyrist touch my lips with gall,  
Lips, from which none but grateful words shall fall.  
Can I forget?—But I must here be dumb,  
So vast my debt, I cannot count the sum;  
Words would but fail me, and I claim no art,  
I boast no eloquence—but of the heart.*

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